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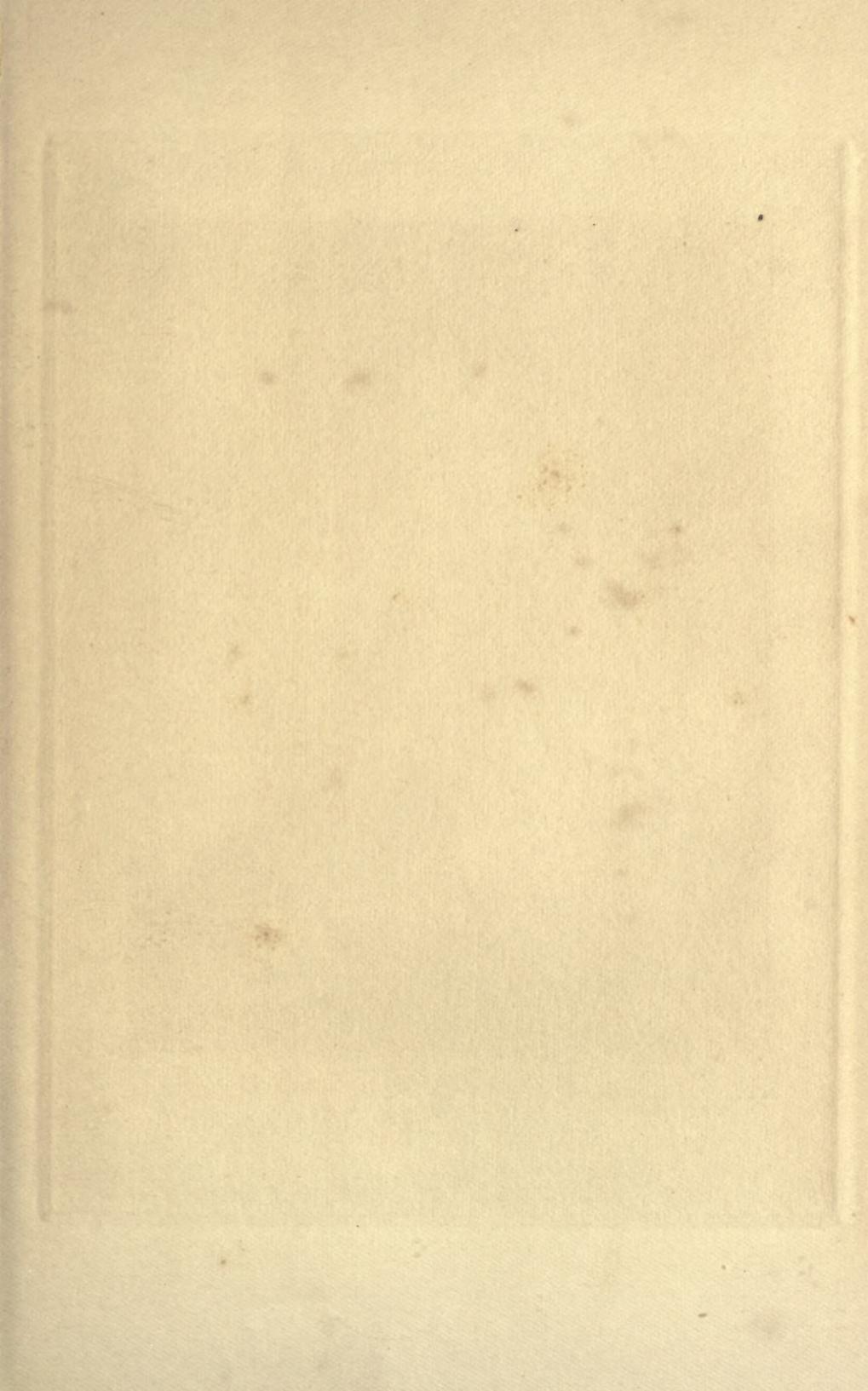
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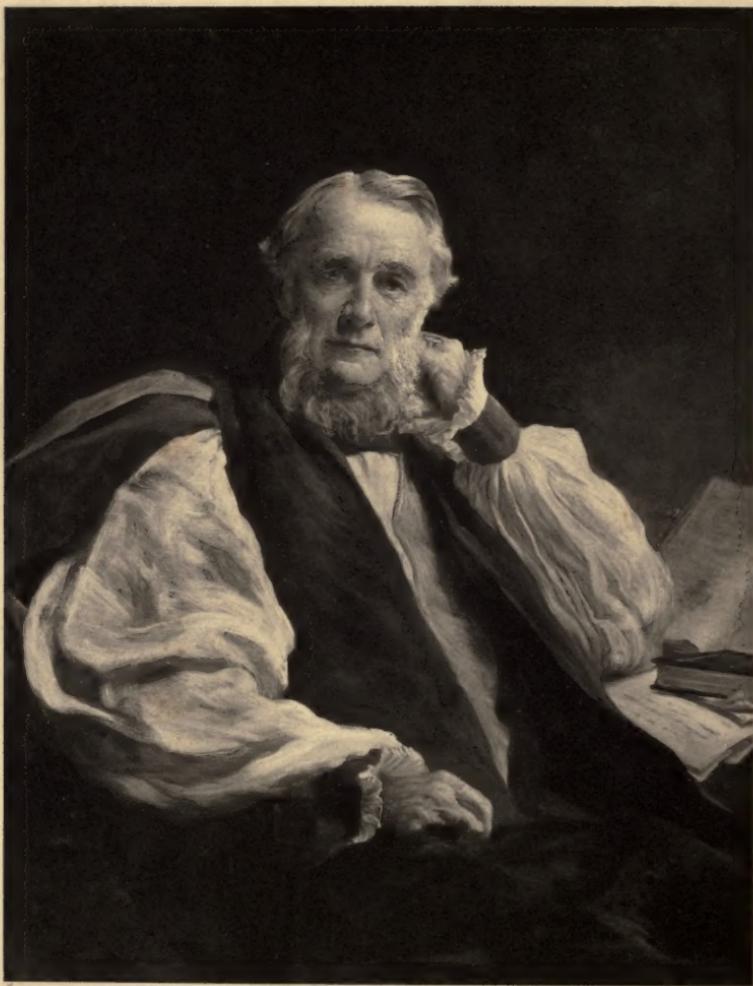
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THE LIFE OF
EDWARD HENRY BICKERSTETH, D.D.
BISHOP AND POET







Miss Mort. Minch
E. H. Exon

A. S. Cope, A.R.A. pinx.

Walter L. Colls. Etch'd.

THE LIFE OF
EDWARD HENRY BICKERSTETH
D.D.
BISHOP AND POET

AUTHOR OF "PEACE, PERFECT PEACE,"
"YESTERDAY, TO-DAY AND FOR EVER"

BISHOP OF EXETER 1885—1900

BY

FRANCIS KEYES AGLIONBY, M.A.

VICAR OF CHRIST CHURCH, WESTMINSTER
ONE OF HIS EXAMINING CHAPLAINS

WITH PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAIT
AND 5 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS



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1907

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TO
ELLEN S. BICKERSTETH
WITH THE AFFECTION AND
GRATITUDE OF
THE AUTHOR

P R E F A C E

THE preface to a biography is oft-times little else than an attempt to justify its publication. He who writes the life of such a man as Bishop Bickersteth need make no such apology. It is quite another question how far a writer has been successful in the portraiture which he has tried to give. Whatever may be the value of this effort, it is humbly offered as a grateful tribute to the memory of a highly honoured servant of God, and as a record for those who shall come after, of the noble work which he did for the Church in his generation. It would be an affectation were I to profess to have given a detached view of one, the fascination and the magnetism of whose personality exercised so strong an influence upon those who came within its range.

A biographer should speak from knowledge : he must not have too much to say : he should not say too much : he must let the subject of the book speak for himself.

As one who had close and frequent intercourse with Bishop Bickersteth for more than thirty years, having been his Curate and one of his Examining Chaplains, I am able to speak of him from personal

knowledge. His papers and correspondence have been freely placed at my disposal by the members of his family, who have rendered me every assistance in their power. My grateful acknowledgments are also due to many others for their kindness in contributing reminiscences and appreciations, together with the use of letters.

And further, it is required of a biographer that he should not have too much to say: he must not be prolix. The readers of this book will judge for themselves how far I have profited by the chorus of warnings given me under this head from the outset.

And again, a biographer ought not to say too much: he must be discreet. Herein, too, none of us can "see oursels as ithers see us." It is difficult to hit the true mean, to know where to stop or what to omit. Those who knew Bishop Bickersteth will readily believe that there could be few passages to soften down in what he spoke or wrote. In some instances—they are rare—in which he is quoted as speaking or writing in strong terms, I have thought it best to leave the passages as they stood. He never forgot the rule of charity.

This book is sent forth with the earnest prayer that the great Head of the Church will vouchsafe His abundant blessing in the accomplishment of the purpose with which it has been written. *Benedictus benedicat.*

F. K. AGLIONBY.

CHRIST CHURCH,
WESTMINSTER,
September 1, 1907.

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*Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within*

FACSIMILE OF HYMN "PEACE, PERFECT PEACE."

PEACE, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?
The Blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?
On Jesus' bosom nought but calm is found.

Peace perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
In Jesus' keeping we are safe and they.

Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough; earth's struggles soon shall cease.
And Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace.

THE LIFE OF
E. H. BICKERSTETH, D.D.
BISHOP AND POET

CHAPTER I

1825-1848

Parentage—Rev. Edward Bickersteth—Watton—Life at the Rectory—
Education—Recreations—Visits—Early religious impressions—
Cambridge—Recollections by Prof. J. E. B. Mayor—Reminiscences
of the Bishop by the Rev. E. B. Birks—Degree—Prize poems—
Ordination—Marriage.

“The generation of the faithful shall be blessed.”

PSALM CXII. 2.

“The Child is father to the Man.”

WORDSWORTH.

EDWARD HENRY BICKERSTETH was born on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, January 25, 1825. His father was the Rev. Edward Bickersteth, assistant secretary of the Church Missionary Society, and his mother Sarah, eldest daughter of Mr. Thomas Bignold of Norwich. They lived in Barnsbury Park, Islington, then bordered by fields which stretched away to the heights of Highgate and Hampstead.

And here the beaten track of biographers must be followed, since all who are interested in a career are concerned to know such particulars as may be summed up under the hackneyed terms, heredity

and environment. It is easier to exaggerate or disparage these factors than to assign to each its proper scope in the growth and development of a character. Let it be granted, indeed, that personality with its fundamental attributes comes in every case direct from the hand of God, that what ultimately decides a life is from within. But there are also unmistakable tokens of "the divinity which shapes our ends," both in the traits and tendencies which are transmitted by a man's forefathers, and in the circumstances which do so much to modify character, and to give it direction, even where they cannot determine it.

The branch of the Bickersteth family from which the Bishop was descended, settled at Kirkby Lonsdale in Westmoreland in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Its descent can be traced to Ralph Bickerstaff, high sheriff of Lancashire, who fought under Henry Tudor at Bosworth Field. Henry Bickersteth, the grandfather of the Bishop, a surgeon at Kirkby Lonsdale in Westmoreland, had a remarkable quartette of sons. One of these was John Bickersteth, widely known in his generation as a devoted clergyman, whose sons were Edward Bickersteth, Dean of Lichfield, and Robert Bickersteth, Bishop of Ripon. Another, Henry, was Senior Wrangler at Cambridge in 1808. He became a barrister, and rising to the Mastership of the Rolls, he was created Baron Langdale. He refused the Lord Chancellorship. Robert, the youngest son, became a surgeon of eminence in Liverpool, and Edward, the Rector of Watton, was father of the Bishop. It is

impossible to dispose of such a career as that of Edward Bickersteth, of Watton, in a paragraph or two; for his zeal and devotion and what he made his home to become, had a powerful formative influence upon the training of his son. The soil in which a tree grows does not account for the tree itself, but it has much to do with its growth and with the flavour of its fruit.

Edward Bickersteth, the father of the Bishop, began his career in the post-office in London, early in the year 1800. Shortly afterwards he determined to become a solicitor, and gave himself to the duties of his profession with the utmost diligence until his call to the ministry in 1815. For some years previously he had carried on religious work with great earnestness and success as a layman. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Norwich, and within a week, priest by letters dimissory at Gloucester. He accepted the post of assistant secretary to the Church Missionary Society and was forthwith sent out by the committee to inspect their missions in West Africa. Those who selected him for such a work had judged rightly of his qualifications, for besides the glow and enthusiasm of missionary zeal, he had the knowledge of men and of the world which a professional training of many years had given him.

He admitted the first of the society's converts to the Holy Communion, and the experience which he gained of the trials and difficulties of a missionary life, as well as of the stifling atmosphere of a heathen environment, did much to equip him for the extraordinary services which he rendered

to the cause of missions during the remainder of his life.

He entered upon his duties as secretary, residing in Salisbury Square and superintending the training of missionaries. He also ministered regularly at Wheler Chapel in Spitalfields, and began work for the society as a deputation, in almost every part of England. The hearts of people opened everywhere to him in a wonderful degree; he seems to have combined the fiery zeal of a Paul with the sympathy and tenderness of a Barnabas.

In 1830 he was nominated to the parish of Watton, in Hertfordshire, by John Abel Smith, Esq., of Woodhall Park, whither he removed from Barnsbury Park in the autumn of that year, and where he spent the remaining twenty years of his life. Besides the diligent work of a country pastor, he supported a number of societies, amongst others the Bible Society, the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, the Pastoral Aid Society, and the Evangelical Alliance.

He also threw himself with great energy into literary work, and his books, such as the Treatises on Prayer and on the Lord's Supper, and his hymnal, had a vast circulation.

Watton is a village of much quiet beauty, its houses straggling along the old high-road from London to the north through Stevenage and Hitchin. The picturesque thirteenth-century church nestles under the hill to the west, some quarter of a mile away, with its massive tower amidst trees which partly hide it from view. The beautiful avenue of elms which now leads to the

church, was planted by the Bickersteths soon after they came to Watton.

The commodious old rectory stands a few yards above the churchyard to the south-west. Edward Henry Bickersteth was five years old when the family moved thither. His physique was vigorous, and his disposition remarkable for the buoyancy and joyousness which he retained throughout his life.

He was nurtured from the outset in an atmosphere which was deeply religious and thoroughly consistent. Precept and example were closely interwoven in the lives of those who watched over his opening years, and gave him his first impressions of eternal things. Truly in a sense transcending Wordsworth's meaning of the words, "Heaven lay about him in his infancy."

A glimpse of the home life at Watton Rectory is given in some recollections, which were committed to writing more than sixty years ago by his younger sister Emily.¹ Edward, then about fifteen, and another boy of his own age, the son of a friend, were reading together for the university with a tutor. The *régime*, though quiet, was one of great activity, the house being likened to a bee-hive, so busily were its inmates occupied. For them "life was real, life was earnest;" there was no stagnation, every one seeming to realize that "still waters turn no mills."

The little narrative somewhat quaintly says—

"At 5.30 every morning an alarm clock went off, and roused Edward, who tumbled half asleep

¹ Mrs. Durrant.

into his shower-bath, and soon roused his sisters by vigorous knocks at their doors. In an hour's time all were down stairs, the boys at work with their tutor, the other members of the family astir at their employments. The Rector himself spent part of this time in a retired walk above the garden, engaged in his devotions. At 7.50 he returned from his walk and gathered his children into his study where each one repeated passages from the Holy Scriptures of their own choosing, some of them in this way learning whole books of the Bible."

The Bishop himself recollects learning the last twenty-eight chapters of Isaiah in his boyhood, and very likely he did it in this way.

"Then their father prayed for them in words which his daughter has recorded. The whole household assembled by 8 for breakfast, and there followed at 8.30 family prayers, with a hymn, a reading and exposition of Holy Scripture, the whole being concluded by 9 o'clock, when all dispersed to their several occupations."

It was said that from the outset the members of that household were taught to get good and to do good, and one of them recalled a saying of her father one day, as she was going out into the village, and had asked, "Father, what can I do for you ?" "Do all the good you can, my child."

The Rector had wide interests, and the daily post, with tidings of movements, missionary, ecclesiastical, social, educational, from all quarters, together with the visits of many eminent and eminently good men, kept the family circle in touch with the outer world and gave a wider horizon to its outlook.

It must also be said that the views respecting amusements and social life generally, then prevalent among a great many religious persons in England, were strongly held at Watton.

The lines were drawn then where few would draw them now, and young people were warned against pastimes, now thought to be good or neutral in their character, as being hurtful to souls, inconsistent with higher spiritual growth and fruitful service in the Lord's vineyard. At the same time the home life at Watton Rectory was bright and even merry ; diversions and recreations of a loftier character were encouraged which afforded real refreshment in the intervals of busy lives. Most of us to-day do not see eye to eye with them in these things, but we may well believe that such an attitude upon the part of many earnest Christian people, however it might tend to provoke a reaction in the succeeding generation, did more to raise the standard of true religion in the world in after days than would have been possible, had they been more lenient with themselves and with others.

Young Edward Bickersteth was educated entirely at home until he went to Cambridge in 1843. His tutor was the Rev. T. R. Birks,¹ a young Fellow of Trinity of brilliant attainments, who acted as his father's curate and subsequently married his elder sister. The Bishop wrote of him in after years, "I shall always esteem him as one of the most original and clear-sighted thinkers of the Church of England." To Professor Birks he owed his first love for Plato and Milton.

¹ Afterwards Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy.

As a boy he was very fond of out-of-door pursuits, having a great love for animals, and especially for horses. His sister writes :

"Of sports, as they are now understood, Edward had but little in his boyhood, but of healthful play a great deal. A lady in his father's congregation gave him a magnificent Newfoundland dog, which became one of the great treasures of the Rectory children, and Edward was seldom without him in recreation time. Boating on a small sheet of water in Mr. Smith's beautiful grounds, where also he enjoyed skating in winter, was another favourite amusement. He loved to chase the deer, of which there was a fine herd, from those parts of the park into which they had trespassed from their own domain."

He was passionately fond of cricket and a bowler in one of the Trinity Elevens. He retained his interest in the game to the end of his life, and could never pass a cricket-field without stopping to look on.

He frequently visited at the houses of his near relations at Norwich and Liverpool, at Sapeote and at Coppenhall. In 1841 the whole family went with their father to visit his parents at Kirkby Lonsdale, and whilst there young Edward came to know the exquisite scenery of the valley of the Lune and the lakes and the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. They occupied a house known as Old Hall, which was placed at their disposal by Mr. William Carus Wilson of Casterton Hall, a man widely known and beloved for his Christian zeal and good works, and a lifelong friend of the Bickersteth family.

Some letters from his father during these years

have been preserved, and they are full of the tenderest affection and the most outspoken counsels. He was urged "to seek those things which are above, and to aspire after the friendship only of those who loved their Saviour." He was warned not to spend too much time at chess, as the recreations he ought to follow were those which would keep him in strong health.

It is only with the most reverent reserve that any may venture to draw aside the veil which hides the workings of the spiritual life even in the youngest child. Edward Bickersteth was the child of earnest prayers from his birth, and his youth had been carefully shielded from influences which might contaminate. His parents held strongly the truths which the Church teaches in her baptismal offices as to the Christian covenant, its blessings and its obligations; but they belonged to a school of religious thought which looked anxiously for tokens that the soul had yielded its response to the love of its Saviour. They longed and prayed for indications that their child had apprehended that for which all the baptized are apprehended of Christ Jesus. And hence we find his father writing to him in 1838, "Oh, my dear child, I do long to see you heartily and wholly decided to serve God, the only happy life for you, and I know that He will help you, if you really ask Him." But before, in 1836, in a letter to his son's godmother, Lady Lucy Whitmore, he wrote, "My dear boy gives me much comfort; I trust that we shall all receive (I include yourself) a rich revenue for all the seed of prayer sown for him."

How those prayers were answered it may be permitted to tell from his own recollections. Between fifty and sixty years after, he told a small group of his chaplains at Exeter, as they conferred together at the close of one of the Ember days, the story of the supreme crisis in his own life. They listened with mingled awe and emotion, as the Bishop spoke of the struggles which found their climax in the conscious surrender of himself into his Saviour's keeping, and of the peace which came to him thereupon. He had been reading a book which had greatly helped him, Krummacher's "The Prophet Elijah." It was on a Sunday afternoon when he was about fourteen. He told how he had sought his father the same evening, and made known the joyful tidings. Very soon afterwards he made choice of the ministry as his calling in life, to which no doubt his father had dedicated him long before.

It has been shown that he shared the tastes of other healthy boys of his own age, and it would appear, too, that he was inclined to be a little masterful. As a corrective to this tendency, the companionship of a boy of his own age seemed to be desirable. Mention should be made of his devotion to his mother, who bore meekly and bravely the affliction of serious deafness, whilst she did her part nobly as wife and mother in a large household.

The sick room of his sister, Frances, also taught him lessons of patient suffering and Christian submission to the will of God. His little book, "Water from the Well Spring," consists of meditations upon passages of Holy Scripture, written for her. An

account of her long illness and heroic endurance of pain is given in a very remarkable book, “*Doing and Suffering*,” by one of her sisters.

He entered Trinity, Cambridge, in the autumn of 1843. Some of his father’s letters have been preserved, but these give no direct information as to the life of the young undergraduate. He rejoices for his son in the friendship of William Carus, a Fellow of Trinity, the biographer of Charles Simeon, and Professor Scholefield, both leading Evangelicals in the university at that time.

Edward Bickersteth’s years at Cambridge were characterized by diligence in work and irreproachable fidelity to the religious principles in which he had been nurtured, and which had become his own by deliberate choice. No marvel if he were kept unspotted from the world, if amidst the temptations to young men in their college days “he held his heavenward course serene.”

His cousin, the Rev. J. E. B. Mayor, Professor of Latin in the University, who was his contemporary, has kindly contributed some reminiscences of their time at Cambridge. “E. H. B. as an undergraduate attended Professor Scholefield’s evening sermons at St. Michael’s, and sometimes the meetings held by William Carus, Dean of Trinity, in a room which he had built for the purpose, where some hundreds of undergraduates might be seen on Sunday evenings.

Edward Bickersteth was intimate with many of the best Trinity men of his time. At a party which he gave just before leaving Cambridge he expressed his grateful thanks to H. R. Luard (afterwards

Registry), who had saved his life whilst swimming in the Cam, at a spot nearer to Granchester than the present bathing-shed.

Many have been the changes in Cambridge since those days : the railway had not come, coals were brought up by barge from Lynn, and fires were lit with bundles of sedge bought from the bed-makers.

Although the round of studies was very narrow, a striking proof of the tone and scholarship of the Trinity men of 1847 appears in the wonderful copy of verses written in Galliambics by Evans and Vansittart for the tercentenary of Trinity College.

J. J. Blunt, W. H. Mill, and Corrie had influence in the pulpit there, and Melville was still occasionally heard.

Leslie Ellis, Senior Wrangler and editor of Bacon, though almost a fossil bodily, was a great spiritual force as he lay at Trumpington. Coleridge, Arnold, Julius Hare, Thirlwall, and S. R. Maitland, a strong Protestant and strongly opposed to Pusey and Newman, were largely read by thoughtful men, as was also F. D. Maurice. The chief men of science of the time, Stokes, Adams, Sedgwick, Cayley, were all earnest Christians."

To these may be added a few recollections of Edward Bickersteth himself, which have been preserved by his nephew, the Rev. E. B. Birks, formerly Fellow of Trinity, and Rector of Kellington.

" Among his college friends, besides his future brother-in-law, Joseph Fenn, were his fellow-students in classics, Brook Foss Westcott, Evans,

Vansittart, and Scott. Fenn was in the year above him, graduating in 1846; Evans and Vansittart were the Seniors in his own year, Scott and Westcott in the year below him, and though he himself took a third class, he was the chosen associate of the highest classics of two successive years.

“Another of his friends was Rob Roy Macgregor, the canoist and shoebblack’s friend, known at college by the name of a then noted religious book, Allen’s ‘Decided Christian.’ Macgregor was a Wrangler.

“Edward Bickersteth belonged to the Historical Debating Society, and on one occasion he proposed that ‘Macaulay in his Essay on Bacon shews that he understands neither Bacon nor Plato.’ The late Lord Derby carried the somewhat tame amendment ‘that Macaulay understood Bacon but not Plato.’”

Although a conscientious and industrious worker, he was disappointed in his class, being a Junior Optime and a third classman in classics, but his marked, and at that time unique, distinction lay in another direction. He obtained the Chancellor’s Prize Poem for three consecutive years, the subjects set being “The Tower of London,” “Caubul,” and “Caesar’s Invasion of Britain.” He writes of these in a preface to his earliest volume of poems in 1849, “they have been reprinted without alteration except the closing stanzas, which the kindly banterings of divers private critics have led me to peruse and slightly change.”

Many years later, in a sermon preached in Exeter Cathedral on the Diamond Jubilee of

Queen Victoria, he recalled a scene of his Cambridge life.

"It was my privilege," he said, "as an undergraduate of Trinity, Cambridge, to be one of those who laid down our gowns for her to tread on, as she walked with graceful mirth and words of thanks on her lips, the Prince Consort following in her steps from the Master's Lodge to inspect our College Chapel in the autumn gloom. She was pleased to say that she had never received a heartier welcome, and oh, how proud we all were to have her under what we called 'our roof' for two nights."

After taking his degree Edward Bickersteth began his special preparation for Holy Orders in the following year. And as with many whose ministry has been greatly blessed by God, when the time drew near the sense of responsibility pressed sorely upon him. Of no sphere of duty is the saying, "that fools rush in where angels fear to tread," more true than of the sacred ministry. That such was the case with him appears from a letter of rare tenderness and wise sympathy from his brother-in-law, the Rev. T. R. Birks, to whom he had unbosomed his grief. He had preserved this letter with evident care for the rest of his life.

At length, on February 6, 1848, he was ordained deacon by Bishop Stanley of Norwich. On the following Sunday he preached his first sermon at Watton to a crowded congregation, from 1 Corinthians i. 30, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." A few weeks later his father wrote,

‘On Thursday the 24th, at Norwich, I married my dear and only son Edward to Rosa Bignold. I have great joy in hoping that the marriage will be full of blessing.’ Edward Bickersteth’s wife was his cousin, the daughter of Mr., afterwards Sir Samuel, Bignold, at one time Mayor and subsequently M.P. for Norwich. They removed shortly afterwards to Banningham near Aylsham, in Norfolk, to the curacy and sole charge of which the young deacon had been licensed. The same year he was admitted to the priesthood.

CHAPTER II

1848-1878

Banningham—Parish work—Hinton Martell—Hampstead—Recollections—Bereavements—Personal influence—Organization—Visit to America.

“ Give those that teach pure hearts and wise,
Faith, hope and love all warmed by prayer,
Themselves first training for the skies,
They best will raise their people there.”

BP. J. ARMSTRONG.

THE young curate and his newly wedded wife settled in at Banningham on March 11, 1848, as we gather from an address on “the close of a first ministerial year,” which he printed in March, 1849. It was the substance of a sermon on the words, “They watch for your souls as they that must give account.” It gives an ideal of the ministry which he had set before himself from the beginning, an ideal which grew and strengthened throughout the half-century of his active career in the Church of God, as deacon, priest, and bishop, and which may be said to have haunted and thrilled him to the very end.

A small manuscript book dated October, 1850, gives in detail his methods of pastoral work. It contains a list of the households in the parish, with the names of the heads of each, besides the name and age of every child in the family, with notes of individual cases.

He divided the parish into four districts for ministerial visitation, to which four days in the week were devoted. By seeing from four to six families a day, each district would be entered every week, and the whole visited every month. Then there came lists of families in the districts to which he went from Tuesday till Friday in each consecutive week. It was not a work entirely novel to him, as in the flyleaf of the same book there occur a few notes of visits amongst the poor at Watton as far back as 1844.

The sermon to which reference has been made strikes the note of a love to souls which all who were ever thrown with him, felt to be deep and intense. In accordance with the Evangelical preaching of those days, he addressed himself to three classes of souls, those who were dead, those who were awaking, and those who were living. The dead who might be respectable and moral outwardly, were bidden to remember the warnings of God's Word. "To be carnally minded is death :" not merely to act carnally, but to be carnally minded. The awaking were bidden not to stay in all the plain, not to look behind, but with purpose of heart, to cleave unto the Lord. The living were exhorted to be "separate from the world, to walk closely with God, to be self-denying, to be prayerful and to be united."

He had formed a prayer union ; the names of its members are given in the little book, as are also those of the communicants at the end of his time at Bannington, thirty-five in all, twelve of whom had begun to attend during his ministry.

He also gives a register of burials, some forty of which had taken place during the three years and a half of his residence in the parish, which certainly betokens a very heavy death-rate and unsanitary conditions generally. The number of baptisms was thirty-six, nearly equalling the rate of deaths.

Not many letters descriptive of those years have come down. His father writes from Banningham in September, 1848 :—

“We had a very happy Sunday yesterday. The four parents and their two children met, and we had the Lord’s Supper in Banningham Church with about twenty-five communicants. I preached in the afternoon for the C.M.S., and in the evening at Felmingham for the Jews, and go with Edward, please God, to Cromer to-night and to Yarmouth to-morrow. The most delightful thing to me was to hear my dear son preach a very faithful sermon on Luke xii. 32, and to be cheered by the hope that the Lord will be gracious to him, as He has been to his father, in blessing him to promote His holy and happy Kingdom.”

An extract from another letter of his father’s in the following year, shows how the requirement for greater elasticity in the Church’s services had begun to be felt even in those days. It is of interest, too, to note the way in which his predecessor but one as Bishop of Exeter, Henry Philpotts, a doughty champion of Church Order, is mentioned.

“I do not think even the Bishop of Exeter would quarrel with you for using the Litany alone in Lent and giving a short sermon after it, though

I suppose nothing is fully canonical but the whole service, inexpedient as it would be in a country village."

Few details of the home life at Banningham have been preserved. Edward Bickersteth had in his young wife a true help-meet in every department of his life and labours, a personality of rare loveliness and sweetness, one who shared to the full his ideals and aspirations. Their two eldest children were born at Banningham, the younger of whom, Edward, became the devoted missionary Bishop of the English Church in South Tokio.

In May, 1849, Edward Bickersteth went with his father to the jubilee of the Church Missionary Society in London, where a hymn which he had written, "O Brothers, lift your voices," was sung. He lived to hear it at the centenary of the Society in 1899, as Bishop of Exeter.

In March, 1850, he sustained the loss of his honoured father, towards whom his heart went forth in the tenderest affection. He was compelled to leave Banningham in the autumn of 1851, through weakness of health, and removed to Tunbridge Wells where he served as curate of Christ Church for three months. This was his first experience of preaching regularly to an educated congregation, and his sermons made a great impression.

The following year brought him the nomination to the Rectory of Hinton Martell, near Wimborne, in Dorset, by Lord Ashley, the friend of his father, and afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury. There

he carried on a devoted and diligent pastorate during the next three years.

A prospectus or manifesto issued at the beginning of the year 1854 gives as his watch-word : "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in that which is least is unjust also in much" (St. Luke xvi. 16). "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." Public baptisms were to be administered on the first Sunday in each month. Parents were requested to inform their minister, a few days before a baptism, of the names of the God-parents. It was also particularly requested that any persons coming to the Lord's Table for the first time, or who had been absent twice, except from illness, would see, or write to their minister before they came.

Weekly lectures were held on Wednesday evenings in the schoolroom, the first in each month being devoted to a missionary subject, and there was a prayer meeting at the Rectory on Saturday evenings. During the winter months, an adults' night school and reading-room were opened on three evenings in the week. The list of books in the library is given ; it consisted largely of books which appealed for the most part to persons of thoughtful and serious minds.

He used to tell an amusing story of an old parishioner at Hinton Martell. She was to come to the Rectory for soup on alternate Fridays and to send next Friday, and every other Friday. She came on both Fridays and said, "Sir, I

thought you told me to come next Friday and every other Friday," meaning all the others.

His eldest daughter¹ writes—

"Among the recollections of my father are his Bible stories on Sunday evenings to my brother and myself, when we could not have been more than four and five years old. He made the stories live to us, with his vivid word painting and with the help of two sets of beautiful pictures.

"His intense interest in Missionary work always had the effect of making it very real to us. Before I was six years old, I remember going with him in his visits to the sick and poor and how he was welcomed by them."

In 1852 his invalid sister, Frances Bickersteth, whom he tenderly loved—entered into rest. He wrote to the sister who had nursed her for years—

"Look not at the things which are seen—the transient and temporal—but at the enduring and eternal. Do this early for your own sake, for our precious mother's sake, and above all for our Saviour's sake, who is, perhaps, never so much honoured as when His people are joyful in tribulation, and sorrow with a chastened but hopeful joy, even as the rainbow clouds weep and brighten at once."

In a letter from Hinton Martell the following year, the writer says—

"This is a sphere in which the powers God has given him are by no means buried. I am often quite astonished at the influence which he

¹ Mrs. F. M. Rundall.

has gained in the neighbourhood. The affection of the people is a great joy and strength."

In the spring of 1855, he was asked to take temporary duty at Christ Church, Hampstead, which had just been given up by the Rev. the Hon. J. T. Pelham, afterward Bishop of Norwich, with a view to his appointment to the living. The offer was made to him by the Trustees on June 11th, and a few days later he writes, "With a crushing sense of responsibility, I have accepted the living." Early in August he brought his family to the large old-fashioned house in Cannon Place, which was to be their home for the next thirty years. From the garden in front of his study window, there was a superb view over London in fine weather to the Surrey Hills. To the right, above a screen of trees, rose the graceful spire of the church which was a landmark for many miles around. His garden was a perpetual source of pleasure to him. He planted apple trees there and at each of his other homes, and was very proud of his rhododendron, supposed to be the largest single root in England. He used to say that he had written most of his books "sitting under the vine and fig tree of his own planting."

His eldest daughter thus continues her recollections of their life at Hampstead.

"After my brother grew old enough to go to school, our father read and talked about one of the Proverbs of Solomon every morning after breakfast for a few minutes, and then walked nearly as far as the school with the boy. He also offered him a prize



CHRIST CHURCH, HAMPSTEAD : WITH VICARAGE, SHOWING STUDY.

for each chapter of the book of Proverbs he could say by heart, and a larger prize when he should be able to repeat the whole book.

"The happy summer holidays live in our memory. He enjoyed all the pleasure so keenly ; and we loved having him with us most of the day, since, at home so busy was his life, that we often saw but little of him from day to day.

"Five evenings in the week for many years, he read aloud poetry to us for three quarters of an hour after seven o'clock. In this way we knew much of Shakespeare, Milton, Southey, Wordsworth, Longfellow, Tennyson, also parts of Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Moore, good translations of Homer, and portions of many other poets.

"He made a rule of reading aloud the leading articles of the *Times* after lunch, and discussing the men and events of the day. Then, too, his Bible Classes were a weekly interest. First of course we belonged to the children's, and after Confirmation to the adult's class, in both of which we had questions set us. We were expected to give in carefully prepared answers, and these were returned to us the next week, with pencilled criticisms at the end.

"He drew many interesting people into our home, both English and American ; well-known clergymen who came to stay or to preach ; friends such as John Macgregor, Bishop Thorold and Bishop French, beside others who loved his books, and wanted to meet the author. All alike were much attracted by his vivid personality and my mother's sweetness and grace.

"He could be stern upon occasion, but what struck us, even as children, was his saintliness, and his intensely bright and sunny nature. He often said that he had three distinct enjoyments of most pleasures ; anticipation, fruition, retrospect ; and he

constantly quoted the sayings ‘Always sit on the sunny side of the hill,’ and ‘Never cross a bridge till you come to it.’

“He was a great traveller, and took my brother with him to Norway and America; and when we were quite young, my brother and four of us went to Switzerland with him.

“After I married and went out to India, he wrote to me every week, until within two years of his death, when through increasing weakness the letters became shorter, and then were too great a burden for his waning strength.

“His grandchildren were a very great pleasure to him, and when my children had to be sent home from India, he and my kind stepmother gave them the happiest of homes for many years in the Palace at Exeter.”

The Rev. E. B. Birks also contributes recollections of the early home life at Hinton Martell and Hampstead, which throw some side lights upon the portraiture of it which has just been given.

“My own first recollections of my uncle are as Rector of Hinton Martell, where I stayed with him, with my father and mother. A little book which he brought out then, “Sabbath evenings at home,” was the delight of my childhood. It was in the form of dialogues between father and children, showing how much positively is told us of that other better world. He went with his Churchwarden, Mr. Tatham, and my father to Switzerland in 1856, the year of my mother’s death. My next recollections of him which are prominent, are of his coming to Kelshall to give us an account of what he had seen in Ireland of the Irish revival.

“It was in 1862 that I came under his roof to

attend Highgate School with Edward. Daily at breakfast he read one of the Proverbs of Solomon, and I think Trench on English Proverbs. Then he started out with us and went part of the way to school. The educative value of that daily walk with him was not small. Wet or fine, if I remember rightly, he came with us. In winter it would be across the Vale of Health and by the high-road; in summer by the fields between Traitor's Hill and Lord Mansfield's Park; and he taught us to delight in the beauty of the woods. He would tell us also of his own University life.

"That summer there was an epidemic at the school, and we were for a bit in quarantine at the Vicarage, taught by him; I remember his setting us to put the beginning of the *Aeneid* into English verse and correcting my "I sing of arms and of a man," to "Arms and a man I sing," and also his giving us the exhortation in the Baptismal Service to turn into Latin prose.

"In 1863, at the beginning of which year my sister died, he prepared me for Confirmation. I shall never forget the first instruction on 'Him with whom we have to do.' The same year we went a party of five or six, including uncle and aunt, to Scotland, the only tour I ever took with him.

"In my time with him at Hampstead he was beginning to plan the Hymnal Companion and to write the poem. The description of the angel's wings in the latter, was suggested by some lovely drawings which Mrs. Drummond, one of his parishioners, had made from the birds of paradise in the British Museum."

The home life during the years between 1855 and 1873 was interspersed with the births of children and visits from the angel of death. His

aged mother, who lived with him, was called to her rest in the autumn of 1859, after a brief illness. Four years later, on the death of his babe, he wrote—

“ How shall I write and tell you of our deep sorrow ! The Lord has taken from us our sweet blossom Eva Mabel. He called back to His home of light the precious sunbeam which has gladdened our pilgrim home for eight short months. She was a perfect ideal of infant gladness. The Lord had need of her above, and we had need of the heart-deep teaching which nothing but this would give. Pray for us that we may listen to every accent of the still small voice.”

Another heavy sorrow befell him in 1872, when his third daughter, Alice Frances, a girl of exquisite gifts and rare beauty of character, passed away in her nineteenth year, after a prolonged decline. The account which he wrote of her death, entitled “The Master’s Home Call,” had a circulation of many thousands of copies. But the deepest waters he had ever known were yet to be traversed, for in August, 1873, his devotedly loved wife was taken from him, and he left desolate with a large young family. But he himself was comforted of God, with the same comfort which he had been the means for so many years of conveying to others.

The change in 1855 from the cure of a few hundred souls at Hinton Martell to three thousand at Hampstead was very great, but he entered upon his new work with zeal and enthusiasm. He adopted all the ways then usual for ministering to the needs of his people, and devised such means

as a loving ingenuity might suggest. Nor did a pastor ever reap a richer harvest in the warm affection of his flock. Services, classes, meetings of all kinds were held, and movements set on foot for Foreign Missions, Missions to the Jews, the Irish Church Missions, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Evangelical Alliance, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society. Soon after his appointment he began open-air preaching on the Heath, which he carried on so far as his voice would permit. A friend¹ of those years writes:—

“I remember perfectly well his coming to Hampstead. Christ Church had only been built some three or four years. He continued the Bible classes for girls of the upper classes, which Mr., afterwards Bishop, Pelham had begun. About that time Mr. Pennefather, then of Barnet, began the Barnet Conferences, from which the Mildmay and subsequent conferences were developed; Mr. Bickersteth organized a similar conference which was held in the lecture-room, I think about 1861. This room of corrugated iron was built from a legacy left him by his wife’s mother. There was a half-hour’s prayer meeting on Saturday mornings at a private house, when matters private and parochial were remembered, and requests for prayer invited.

“My chief recollection of Mr. Bickersteth was of his great faithfulness as a friend and parish priest. After my father’s death in 1859 he used to visit my mother almost once a week, and she greatly prized these visits. The early part of his incumbency was marked by the healing of a bitter feud there had been in the congregation about the

¹ Miss MacInnes.

east window of the church, which had been given by one of the members. To the five figures in the window some of the congregation objected, and after much painful discussion the stained glass was taken out and the window left blank, but the breach was not healed, as some who had formerly been friends were not on speaking terms. Mr. Pelham did all he could to bring them together, but it was given to Mr. Bickersteth to put the final touch of reconciliation. There was a great sense of a well-organized parochial work, and of this he was the mainspring."

He was a welcomed visitor in the homes of his flock, both rich and poor, and would go at once to those in trouble, "visiting the widow and the fatherless in their affliction." Amongst those to whom he ministered was Mrs. Tennyson, the mother of the Poet Laureate. His own account of her, written many years later, after the death of her son, is given in a note below.¹

¹ *To the Editor of the "Times."*

SIR,—On the day of the funeral of our great poet your readers may be glad of some memories which, for me, cling to the funeral day of his mother. She spent the last years of her life at Hampstead, and it was my privilege from time to time to visit her as her pastor. She died there, and her son Alfred, though he came to the house, would not see her tabernacle after her spirit had fled, saying to me, "My last thoughts of my mother shall be as I saw her two or three weeks ago sitting in that chair : that look is printed in my soul for ever." I conducted the funeral service at Highgate cemetery, and on our return the family insisted on my spending the afternoon with them, and when one present said, "We must not look for any other resurrection ; her spirit has returned to God who gave it, that is the true resurrection," Alfred Tennyson replied, "I do not think that is the teaching of the Scripture we heard read this morning in the chapel before we went to her grave." His faith was anchored on the word of God.

As we sat round the table, thoughts awakened thoughts, and reminiscence called forth reminiscence of their sainted mother. The

He also "rejoiced with them that do rejoice," for when a newly married couple from his congregation came home after their wedding-tour, it was his custom to take family prayer for them on the evening of their return. His wedding-present was generally a family Bible. He was prompt in calling upon those who had recently come to the neighbourhood, and bidding them welcome as their parish clergyman.

He had a genius for bringing people together and inspiring them with the desire to work in different ways. The churchwardens and sidesmen with other leading members of his congregation rallied to his support, not alone in matters which concerned the church with its services and the Parish, but in many outside objects, such as hospitals, refuges, asylums, dispensaries, besides those which have been already mentioned. So large was his band of district visitors that a number of them were led to offer themselves to work in large overcrowded districts near by, such as Gospel Oak. The Sunday Schools were carried on with conspicuous success by a band of able and devoted superintendents and teachers. The charm of his personality made itself felt amongst persons of high intellectual culture in the midst

poet's heart most of all overflowed with admiration and affection. And when at length I rose to leave them, he came alone with me to the hall and said, "Mr. Bickersteth, I hope you will not think I have spoken in exaggerated terms of my beloved mother ; but indeed she was the beautifulst thing God Almighty ever did make." I could only wring his hand and say farewell.

E. H. EXON.

THE PALACE, EXETER,
October 10, 1892.



of whom "he approved himself as the Minister of Christ," drawing their minds to higher things.

In cottage and mansion alike, his presence was in some measure as "the shadow of Peter passing by," which shed a holy influence about it. His radiant face and gentle, cheery words won him an entrance everywhere, for he had much of the power which comes from the calm of a close walk with God.

The outstanding events in his life at Hampstead during these years were his "Commentary on the New Testament," the writing of his poem, "Yesterday, To-day and Forever," and the preparation of "The Hymnal Companion." In the year 1870, after the Hymn-book had gone to the Press, he went with his eldest son to America, where his poem had been very widely read, and his greeting on their side of the Atlantic was such as only Americans know how to give. His welcome was an ovation, and he had delightful intercourse with the poet Longfellow, Dr. Ray Palmer and other men of note in literary circles. But what filled him with joy and thankfulness were the numerous testimonies that his poem had been blessed of God to the consolation of many souls, as well as to the winning of not a few to the faith of Christ. What might have been too much for many a good man only deepened his humility, whilst it rejoiced his heart.

CHAPTER III

1873-1885

Later years at Hampstead—His eldest son goes to India—Letters—
Tour to India and Palestine—Attendance at Church Congresses
—Missions—Clerical Friends in Council

"Christian saw the Picture of a very grave Person hang up against the wall ; and this was the fashion of it. It had eyes lifted up to Heaven, the best of Books in his hand, the Law of Truth was written upon his lips, the World was behind his back. It stood as if it pleaded with men, and a Crown of Gold did hang over his head."—*Pilgrim's Progress.*

"Those fallen leaves which keep their green
The noble letters of the dead."—*In Memoriam.*

THE Vicar of Christ Church, Hampstead, had for some years been called upon to undertake a great deal of work outside his parish. He took part in parochial missions, addressed devotional gatherings of the clergy, conducted Quiet Days, read papers at Church Congresses, served on committees and sub-committees at the C.M.S. and other societies. His own bishop often summoned him with other leading clergy in the diocese to conferences on diocesan questions.

He was the first to introduce Retreats and Quiet Days amongst the clergy and laity of his own school of thought. Although a convinced Evangelical throughout his career, his sympathies went out to earnest and devoted men of other views. He

agreed to differ on relatively minor points with those who did not see eye to eye with himself, but with whom he felt at one on the fundamental truths of the faith. No one ever echoed more heartily St. Paul's words, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." He was wider, too, than many of his Evangelical brethren in the Church of England in his views as to the oneness of all Christian people, and as to the forms in which this unity might be expressed. Thus he held to the last his father's attitude towards the Evangelical Alliance, and he was never ashamed of his opinions nor did he shrink from uttering them, albeit with meekness, when the occasion seemed to require it. His was the staunch Protestantism which maintained that Missions should be sent to Roman Catholics in Ireland and elsewhere. He held it to be the duty of those who had the fuller and purer light of the Reformation to diffuse it amongst those that had it not. And the Roman Catholics themselves would own that herein he was consistent and that he acted on the very principles which determine their own work everywhere. They respected him for it. He could not admit that, whilst they were constantly raiding our flocks, it was anything but right to make reprisals.

In February 1876 he married his cousin, Ellen Susanna, daughter of Mr. Robert Bickersteth of Liverpool, who became the devoted companion and helper of his remaining years.

In the year 1877, his eldest son, who was a Fellow of Pembroke, Cambridge, went out to

India as the founder and first head of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi. And never did father give up a more deeply loved son to God's work. During the four years of his residence in India, Edward Bickersteth received weekly letters from his father, which he carefully preserved. These letters reveal the inmost soul of the writer, and the difficulty has been to select where wealth of material exists in such profusion. Utterances of trust in God, of fervent supplication for his son and the work in which he was engaged, fatherly advice and requests for counsel on his own behalf, constantly recur, and must be taken for granted although not expressed in the extracts from the letters of those years.

He writes, November 21, 1877—

“The Rev. Henry Wright’s stirring appeal for St. Andrew’s Day makes me resolve to double my contribution on that day for this year of need, and I am glad it should be the first year that my beloved son is numbered with the blessed Missionary band of Evangelists. French is to be the preacher at St. Dunstans. I rejoice in his being your Bishop. I feel sure he will prove an elder brother to you.

“I am asked to address 100 clergy in Leeds at their Quiet Day in Ember Week.”

“December 2.

“I can now, as I told my flock last Sunday, testify that there is joy, even a holy hilarity, in acts of self-denial for Christ’s sake. ‘God loveth a cheerful giver.’”

“December 14.

“The *Record* has singled me out as one that patronized Retreats. I have written to them:

‘Protestant and Evangelical Retreats I heartily advocate; Romanizing Retreats I heartily deprecate.’ I dislike all newspaper correspondence exceedingly, but it was an occasion for urging our true-hearted Evangelical leaders and fathers-in-God, to put themselves at the head of this Retreat movement which no one can stop, for it supplies a felt need.”

“ December 21.

“ Bishop French and Bishop Titcombe were consecrated to-day in Westminster Abbey. Is it not a gracious providence that these Bishops for India should be set apart on St. Thomas’ Day? Oh, that they may be apostles in the power of Christ !”

“ December 25.

“ I am greatly feasting on Baldwin Brown’s ‘The Higher Life.’ It is really one of those first-rate books which live in you, and in which you live. You say ‘W. talks of converts being allowed to work on Sunday to keep them out of idleness.’ Surely this must have been foreseen when God gave the Fourth Commandment, or when God gave again to man what he had given in Eden. I do feel so thankful for what you say, that ‘it is the saintliness of his servants which God especially uses, even more than the power of argument, needful as this is.’ ”

“ January 11, 1878.

“ Thank God, solitude and service alike draw us to the Master. He is our life.”

Of preaching away, he says, “I greatly prefer preaching six sermons to one flock, to preaching one in six different churches, for after awhile you get *en rapport* with your hearers.”

" You will have grieved to see in the papers that poor dear Thorold¹ lost his wife. One of the mysteries of our Father's hand, when she seemed indispensable amidst all the claims of his episcopate. I wrote to him and had such a touching reply, though he says he has never lost hold on God for a moment.

" Old Mr. Fenn of Blackheath was called to his rest yesterday. Just thirty years ago I remember his marrying his son to your dear mother's favourite sister. Only ten days ago, he was preaching a most noble sermon in his own church. It was the old soldier's swan-song, the 'Nunc dimittis' of this aged Simeon."

" The Lord God, He it is that doth go before thee" (Deut. xxx. 8). You must often lean on that text which has been a pilgrim's staff to me for nearly forty years."

" January 18.

" My birthday : I can only say Psalm ciii. The climax of all is His acceptance of my blessed eldest son for His Missionary work, work which lies nearest and dearest to the Saviour's heart, and which, though He did not allow my father or me to do, He has now called Edward to undertake. To Him be all praise. He strengthened me to preach 165 sermons in 1877, 122 in Christ Church."

" January 25.

" Wrote a long letter to L. on Baldwin Brown's tractate on annihilation. He is triumphant in proving how impossible and hideous a theory annihilation is, but I think fails in giving sufficient weight to the Scriptures which speak of eternal punishment. After twenty years of thought and

¹ Afterwards Bishop of Winchester.

prayer, I must solemnly believe in eternal punishment, but in what it consists is the question." . . . "Tokens of success humble one even more than disappointments."

" March 8.

"I was asked to address clergy at Windsor; it would be unfortunate if Evangelical clergy do not take up this important work. I was helped to speak to their hearts. Amongst my auditors for the first address was Canon Carter of Clewer, who had come with great difficulty, having to preach at a distance. He came into the vestry and was most cordial. You remember my old favourite simile that if you wish to convey an electric shock to another through yourself, you must first take hold of the electric bar with one hand, and of your brother with the other."

" April 5.

"I spoke to about seventy clergy at Liverpool in the afternoon for nearly an hour, on 'the love of Christ as the motive power for evangelistic and pastoral work.' I do think there was a real power of the Blessed Spirit resting upon us. Mr. Bardsley¹ told me he saw some he should have thought rather hard and rigid, quite moved even to tears. May God water the seed sown."

" May 17.

"I rejoice to hear of Mr. Hunter being sent to you by the S.P.G. from Calcutta, while the C.M.S. take some of his work there. A blessed interchange between 'the two orders' as French calls the C.M.S. and S.P.G. I do hope that Mr. Hunter will be to you the Epaphroditus you so sorely need at this time."

¹ Afterwards Bishop of Carlisle.

* June 6.

"The Bishop designate of Lichfield,¹ asked me to give one of the addresses on his last Quiet Day with his own flock, and which he resolved to have to-morrow. I will take with them my subject of last Sunday. 'I will not leave you comfortless.' I think Whit Sunday must be the most precious of all festivals to a Missionary."

On August 3, he writes from Switzerland : "It was a most lovely day coming across the Brunig Pass. It was so strange last night ; there is a large party of Americans here, and I had an earnest request from them that I should read aloud to them in the salon, selected passages from my poem. As I found it would give them real satisfaction, I consented. They had most of them read the book in America, and were strangely pleased to meet the writer."

"Leukerbad, August 18.

"Since I last wrote to you that hurried note from Mürren, M. and I travelled nearly 2000 miles to Liverpool and back ; but it was worth, indeed, amply worth all, for you know how such hours of meeting round a beloved parent's² grave knit more closely than ever the hearts of loving brothers and sisters, and they did all feel it a special proof of love, our coming so far. We heard so much of the holy peace of our mother's last days, that it was a great comfort ; and for her we do indeed feel that the Great and Good Shepherd has taken His honoured and faithful servant, now wearied out with her long pilgrimage, to His bosom of rest."

¹ Dr. Maclagan, afterwards Archbishop of York.

² Mrs. Bickersteth of Casterton Hall.

"September 6.

"About the Evangelical view of the Lord's Supper, though of course some few hold unworthy views, I have been so accustomed from my childhood to hear my blessed father speak of it as the loftiest privilege of holding tryst with Christ, in the spirit of Eph. iii. 14-17, Rev. iii. 20, that I confess all distinctively High Church views have seemed to me poor and thin in comparison. But I doubt not, we have all to learn each from the other."

Writing of his recent appointment as Rural Dean of Highgate he says—

"September 13.

"It is not a post I should have coveted, but it is a position of influence, for the Bishop really tries to work his diocese through his 25 Rural Deans. My idea is to make a great effort to persuade all the Clergy of the Deanery to meet on Quiet Days here, at least once in the year.

"October 11.

"We have had our Retreat. A most delightful three days. Carpenter¹ was wonderfully helped. So clear, so searching, so tenderly eloquent."

About the Church Congress he says—

"It often amazes and confounds me, that I should be apparently called to speak to others, and so I fear, lest my self-assertion should have led them to form erroneous estimates of the brother they invite to address them. Only may the good Lord spare the hand that dares to touch His holy ark; only may He bless the words spoken in feebleness, and clothe them with the might of His Spirit.

"I was helped at Sheffield. The meeting was

¹ The Rev. W. B. Carpenter, afterwards Bishop of Ripon.

solemn even to holy awe. The good Archbishop grasped my hand twice as I retired from speaking, and thanked me with warm emphasis."—"I have to prepare twelve addresses for the Clifton Quiet Days."

" November 1.

"I fear you have been working too hard; that is, remember, living on capital; now if so, you must repay the loan in shape of extra exercise and rest, and as a rule, rigidly live within your income of strength and living energy. You have as a wise steward (D.V.), to lay out your whole life for the best of Masters in the noblest of fields."

" December 6.

"The Bishop of London wrote last night, asking me to undertake so far as I could, dear MacLagan's work among the candidates for Priest's Orders at his next ordination, and I suppose his future ones. It is an anxious responsibility, and as I have written to him 'I shall be with him in weakness and fear, and in much trembling,' for I think, never is man's mind more ductile, and susceptible of lasting impression, than at ordination."

" January 10, 1879.

"I am reading with deep interest Thomas Erskine's letters, of Linlathen, but he is a confirmed universalist, and I am sure does not give so full weight to the mass of Scripture on the other side, and I fear the book will do harm as well as good."

On January 18, 1879, he writes as follows to one of his sons,¹ at that time in a merchant's office:—

"There is a nobility in merchandise, as we read of Tyre, the Crowning City, 'whose merchants are

¹ The Rev. H. V. Bickersteth, Rector of Falmer.

princes, and whose traffickers are the honourable of the Earth' (Isaiah xxiii. 8.) And this, however, is crowned with new glory when all the tribute is laid at Christ's feet.

"Integrity and intelligence seem the two moral foundation-stones of success. And the racy proverb is some help, 'Drive your work and do not let your work drive you.'"

To his son at Delhi :

"February 14, 1879.

"We had a most blessed Quiet Day last Thursday at St. Paul's. A most excellent, touching, heart-searching address from our Bishop, chiefly on the dangers which beset all ministerial work, his own as a Bishop, and ours as Parish Priests. I do not know when I have felt Christ so near, or God's eye so clearly resting on one's life and work. Then the quiet for prayer, with so many hundreds of clergy praying round, was very impressive—Dear Bishop Thorold's words in the afternoon, on "Thy will be done (Thy will by us, in our works : Thy will in us, as holiness : Thy will for us, as unity) were very powerful, more finished and ornate, and balanced, but much less pathetic than our Bishop's. Still the whole was most profitable, most subduing, most humbling. I did feel thankful again and again, that it sprang first from your suggestion to me and Wilkinson.¹

"March 14.

"I enjoyed Birks' last book, "Supernatural Revelation." God has certainly given him a marvellous power of unravelling sophisms. This he always could do most unsparingly, but I think this volume reveals a chastened maturity of Christian

¹ Afterwards Bishop of St. Andrews.

judgment, befitting one whose warfare is drawing to its close.

"I have begun Wilberforce on the Incarnation, and I am sure I shall be deeply interested in it, though I do not expect to find a response in myself to all his statements. But it is indispensable to walk all round the mountain of truth, and not to be content with one aspect only—nay, we must climb as high as we can, on every pathway of access. There will ever be snowy summits piercing the golden sky far above us. When we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, we shall be able to embrace, I suppose in one wide panorama, all those upland slopes and peaks to which we look up now, but even then there will be, and must be, to limited intelligences, an immeasurable 'beyond.'"

"March 21.

"I was delighted to get Bishop Lightfoot's letter, and that he should be so firmly 'resolved to take the Delhi Mission with him to Durham' is such a great mercy."

"May 16.

"We are to have our first Ruridecanal Meeting on June 4th. The morning will be devotional, and I address them on 'The Pastor in his Study and among his Flock.' The subjects in the afternoon will be Church Defence, and Church Missions. I wish I could have you by my side on such a day. But it is still a greater privilege to have you in 'the high places' of the field of battle. I am delighted with Godet's Biblical Studies, and sent him my poem the other day to Neuchatel, as so many of our thoughts are on the same theme."

After writing of the Gospel of the Resurrection which he had been reading again, he asks—

" June 13.

"Did I tell you that Dr. Vaughan¹ said to me that Westcott was staying with him at the time of Lightfoot's consecration ; and Vaughan said to Westcott, ' Now, friend, do tell what is the difference betwixt you and Lightfoot ? ' and Westcott answered, ' Well, Lightfoot is never content till he has made a subject definite, and I can never be content till I have made it indefinite.' Dr. Vaughan said to me that he thought it was very true, and that both characteristics were of intrinsic value, for all truths needed definition for practical application, and yet as touching on the eternal they were beyond us to define ; and this we must recognise, if we would know the reality of things. All these thoughts seemed to me worthy of the men.

" We have had a heavy loss to the Church in Miss Havergal's death. It was only two or three months ago that she stopped me in Elm Row with such a warm and hearty greeting, and now she has proved her own words—

" "I could not do without Thee,
For years are fleeting fast,
And soon in solemn loneliness
The river must be pass'd ;
But Thou wilt never leave me,
And though the waves roll high,
I know Thou wilt be near me,
And whisper, "It is I." "

" She was only forty-two, and I believe she died repeating—

" "Jesus I will trust Thee, trust Thee with my soul." "

" June 26.

" I have arranged with Rivingtons to publish my poem, ' Yesterday, To-day and For Ever,' for 1*s.* and 2*s. 6d.*, in the same form as their 'Christian

¹ Afterwards Dean of Llandaff.

Year,' though they are not to give me any profits till 10,000 of the 1s. and 3,000 of the 2s. 6d. are sold, which N. thinks will be when we are in our graves. But if it brings the truth before many hearts of the middle class, and if God bless it to any, it will be an overflowing recompense.

"July 1.

"How I wish the condemnatory clauses could be excised (*i.e.* from the Athanasian creed)—it would be a grand song beginning, 'We worship one God in Trinity.' But if this cannot be done, I would, as the Irish Church has done, simply leave it in the Prayer Book as a standard of the true faith, expunging the rubric for its use in the congregation."

"July 25.

"I saw Mr. Speechley and Mr. Ridley (Bishops elect) yesterday. I do trust that they and dear W. W. How and Dr. Barclay will have a rich blessing to-day. What a picture of the wide-stretching English Church! Their consecration is to Travancore, Columbia, Jerusalem, and East London. What an unspeakable mercy it is to be a member of this grand old Church, the noblest witness for Christ in the world!"

"Penmaenmawr, August 28.

"Dean Howson wrote yesterday again, begging me to go with him and Canon Tristram and Dean Fremantle to Palestine next January, but I do not see my way, hoping some day to see it on my return from a visit to you. . . . By the way, in the Missionary Hymn sent you last week, please for 'swarthy' sons of Afric, read 'ransomed.' I thought afterwards, if the hymn found its way to Africa, her sons might resent being described by the colour of their skins. I like your hints given to your devotional meeting, 'How to take Christ with you through the day.'"

"October 12.

"Did I tell you we were actually going to try daily service, morning and evening, in Christ Church, beginning with All Saints Day? And possibly we shall arrange for the church to be open for some hours every day for private prayer, and always have an early communion every Sunday beside the others. Now that the altar is built and the wood laid, only may the Divine fire of the Lord fall from heaven! My flock, on the whole, has taken to the proposal most kindly, but I suspect it needs to educate a generation up to daily services."

"November 7.

"I feel deeply what you say as to the baptism of the low caste, not immediately touching the Mohammedans and Hindoos. Still, every convert is a point of light, a point of contact with heaven. If we could gaze on the population of Delhi and its outskirts, from an angelic point of view, and may we not truly say, a Divine point of view, every true Christian is a Lot in Sodom to His eyes, who is the Father of all. Ministering spirits attend every believer."

"December 12.

"I preached last Sunday in St. Peter's, Eaton Square, to a congregation of nearly 2000 people. Bishop Maclagan has asked me to take two Quiet Days for his clergy on March 3rd and 4th. He gives his charge on March 2nd, and then his wish is that all the clergy of the Lichfield Diocese 'should be on their knees before God together.' He wants to gather them at three or four centres. Bishop W. W. How addresses those at Lichfield, and he asked me to take either Wolverhampton or Derby. I shrink very much from the undertaking, but have after all (D.V.) consented to take the Derby Retreat."

" December 19.

" I am glad to have written those notulae (*i.e.* in the annotated edition of the Hymnal Companion), as some things which passed through my hands, and which no one else knows, may interest some who dive into hymnology.

" I am glad you will have had the opportunity of meeting Lord and Lady Lytton. Though these days seem aside from work, I believe they really are threads of another colour, which are woven into life's strange tissue, and necessary for its harmony and shading."

" March 22, 1880.

" You have been more than ever on my heart the last two days, for I have found out incidentally that a small committee had now been formed of my flock, to present me with a testimonial of the twenty-fifth anniversary of my ministry next month. Mr. Tatham hinted that there was such a project floating in their minds whether a purse, which would lighten my expenses if I took a journey to the East, would be a form acceptable to me. The present from the congregation to me for such an object would remove two of the greatest difficulties in the way of my going: (1) the expense, and (2) the leaving my flock behind. It would be the greatest joy this side heaven to get to you or to have you get to me."

The testimonial was presented on May 7th.

" March 18.

" We had a very interesting and deep discussion on 'the Atonement,' at our Clerical Friends in Council. I am sure we fail to grasp the full comfort of the grand central truth enshrined in Isaiah liii. No less than ten times are Christ's sufferings and death there connected

with our sins. I anchor my soul on Isaiah liii. 5-10; John i. 29; Rom. v. 21; 1 John ii. 6, and I feel no subtleties of reason can shake the security of this salvation. I am sure it is the most central truth of the Gospel, and the most central star of my firmament."

"July 23, 1880.

"We had our important consultative meeting on Tuesday night about the Church Restoration. A large number came, and there was considerable discussion, some strongly deprecating any decoration. Still, I think four-fifths of those present were for the plans submitted to them. I am sure it is right, that the church should shew in every part of it signs of the loving and reverent care of God's people for His house."

September 17.

He writes on the subject of the appointment as Secretary to the C.M.S. of a successor to his very dear friend the Rev. Henry Wright, "I have been asked if I would accept it." After discussing the reasons for and against it he says, "It is curious that I should be even named, just fifty years after my blessed father vacated it upon his appointment to Watton in 1830."

The plans for his tour had been made, and he writes: "I hope that my cursory glimpses of India and Palestine may be of some help in after years as a member of the Church Missionary Committee."

The long expected tour to India and Palestine was begun in October, when he and his wife, with a party of friends sailed from Liverpool in the *Rydal Hall* on the 23rd of that month. Some

account of their travels will be found in the Chapter dealing with his work for Missions.

On May 22nd, 1881, he wrote—

“ You will be devouring the new Revision as we are. It seems to me invaluable as a commentary, and as an expression of the ripest judgment of modern scholars as to readings and translations ; but the English is in many parts so bald and rough that it would never do to substitute it for our present revision without the most extensive recension.”

“ July 8.

“ I must now (D.V.) preach a series of sermons on the Lord’s Supper, and thus get on with my little manual for Rivingtons. And I find it an essential help always to preach on a subject on which I wish to write. It seems to bring you into contact with Him whose messenger you are, and so give a warmth and glow to words which would otherwise be cold, if clear. A sermon ought to be so different from an essay.”

“ September 23, 1881.

“ You know I shrink as much as you do from high Calvinism. It seems opposed to the heart of the God and Father of us all. And yet I think we must not forget, how some of the grandest of men have been bred in schools that laid more stress on the sovereignty than on the creative love of God ; men from St. Augustine down to the Puritans, and lower down to our own time, conquering self and the world. They have grasped one truth, ‘ Whosoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and earth.’ And any real truth is so precious and so strong that, though weighted with many, however untrue inferences, it may accomplish a mighty work for God. The Puritan

stock of New England have been America's might."

Of the Newcastle Congress he writes—

"October 14, 1881.

"My paper on music was well received, and I was warmly congratulated on it both by Beresford Hope and Mr. Randall of Clifton. But I am sure the whole tone of the Congress was higher than any I have hitherto attended, more courtesy, more spirituality, more true to our Reformed Church. At Edward Hoare's request, I sent up my card on the devotional day, and was asked to speak first after the readers. The subject was 'The Helps and Hindrances to the Spiritual Life from the Activities of the Day.' Mr. Body came up afterwards and most heartily thanked me. The Archdeacon of Ely begged me to conduct a Quiet Day for the Clergy there next Lent, which I think I may be able to do. Came home via Liverpool for a quiet Sunday, and spoke to the Manchester Clergy at their Quiet Day at Alderley, Dean Stanley's birthplace."

"October 28.

"I quite felt what you say about H.'s danger of going too far in the direction of admiration of what is true in Mahometanism. Not that we can ever admire the truth too much, but when men 'hold down the truth' (Rom. i. 18) in unrighteousness, it does not do to praise the truth they hold, without a faithful exposure of the unrighteousness, the injustice which throttles it and holds it down. I shall be so glad if you can help him to a juster equilibrium of view."

"November 11, 1881.

"I have been glad of two days in the house for getting on with my book on the Lord's Supper.

I fear it will be longer than it ought to be. It is hard to say what one wants to say in few words. That is the use of poetry, of which the main characteristic always seems to me to be ‘condensed thought.’ ”

The return of his eldest son from India, invalidated by fever, the following year, brings this correspondence to a close. It reveals the character of the writer whilst indicating the enlarged sphere of his activities. These continued to increase during the three years which elapsed before his call to the Episcopate. At Nottingham, Cheltenham, Sunderland, Wigan, Oxford, Sheffield, and other places, he spoke to the hearts and consciences of great numbers of people, many of whom owe their beginning to lead different lives to these missions.

The allusions in his letter to the Clerical Friends in Council should be explained. A few years before, some leading clergy of different schools of thought had agreed to meet and discuss with prayer the subjects which they were wont to regard from divergent points of view. It was felt that such intercourse would tend to draw closer to each other those who loved God and His truth, that it would promote brotherly kindness, and tend to soften prejudice. The Bishop of St. Andrew's writes :—

“ How tenderly he healed all disputes and joined in every effort, like our Clerical Friends in Council, which was intended to bring peace to the Church. I remember so many instances in which this Christ-like spirit was manifested.”

Not a few of the original members of the Society,

like himself, became Bishops, and one of the Secretaries used to say that Mr. Gladstone must have got hold of the list of members for his appointments to bishoprics and deaneries.

The Bishop of London made Mr. Bickersteth one of the members of the small Committee of Clergy who were intrusted with the organization of the great Mission for London in 1884-5. His tact, his soundness of judgment, and his ability as an organizer were such that Bishop Jackson brought his name before the Prime Minister, as one of those who were fitted for higher ministries in the Church.

Thus at sixty, a period in these days of feverish activity, when men who have laboured long in other callings begin to think of putting off their armour, he girded up his loins for the work of a Bishop in the Church of God, a work which he was to carry on for fifteen years. Thus were the words fulfilled, "To him that hath shall more be given," and he had learned at the Mercy-seat how to gain "power with God and with man."

The retrospect of his life at Hampstead, from his own point of view, is well described in the ensuing passage from the farewell sermon to his congregation, in Christ Church, which he preached on Sunday, March 15, 1885:—

"The first sermon I preached in this pulpit at the end of April, 1855, was from the words of our Lord, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me,' and I can truly say my one desire has been to preach Christ among you, for He was my life, and I knew He must be yours.

Would to God that I had preached Him with more faith, and power, and love !

“ But I have tried to preach Him and Him only. And His promise has been verified : many souls have been drawn to the foot of His cross, and His dear servants have fed on the bread of life.

“ As I look back upon the thirty years which have passed like a dream, scene after scene rises before me ; the counsel and co-operation of my fellow-labourers in the Gospel ; the kindness with which you have always admitted me to your homes in the most sacred seasons of sorrow and of joy ; your sympathy with me in like manner when grief has shadowed or blessings gladdened my home ; the confiding trustfulness with which you have sought counsel of me in the things of God, and especially in the training of your children ; the mutual comfort we have had in our schools, boys' and girls', and infants' schools, our sailors' orphans, our weekday and Sunday schools ; the refreshment of our Bible classes, children's and adult classes, when our hearts have so often burned within us, while Jesus Himself drew near, and opened to us the Scriptures ; and then our confirmations, when so very many have joined themselves to the Lord in a covenant which was never afterwards broken ; our prayer meetings, our communicants' meetings—how many can testify, ‘ It has been good to be there ; ’ our united efforts for the home and foreign missions of our Church, for the recovery of the outcast and the lost, and for the world-wide diffusion of the Word of God, and of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—oh, it has been good to have been encircled with such a band of men and women and children, whose hearts God has touched with the holy fire of the Saviour’s love !—and chiefest of all, our services in this house of prayer, which you in your generous kindness so beautifully restored, and our gatherings round the Table of our dear Lord and Master.

"The retrospect passes like a diorama before the mind's eye, and it is gone; but it engraves more clearly than ever on the tablet of my soul the words of the patriarch, 'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto Thy servant.'

"Nor is it only those who are with us to-day: how many have gone forth from our congregation; some to distant homes in our own land; and not a few to foreign lands, where they are faithfully serving Jesus; and I cannot, I would not,—especially on this day, when in a thousand churches England is thinking of her soldier hero and martyr—forget the saints indissolubly one with us who have passed from our embraces on earth to the society of glory. Oh, brothers and sisters in Christ, what a company is gathering there around the Throne! That pure and simple Gospel, which was their guide through life, was their stay in the dark valley (by how many a dying bed have I and my fellow-labourers in the Gospel been permitted to kneel !) and ushered them into the presence of their Lord.

"But I must not linger any more upon the past though the mere effort to count up the mercies of years gone by gives fresh emphasis to the words, 'I thank my God upon every remembrance of you always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'"

CHAPTER IV

1885-1900

Deanery of Gloucester—Nomination to the See of Exeter—Farewells at Hampstead—Consecration—Enthronement—Confirmations—Ordinations—Relations with his clergy—The Cathedral—The Chapter—Hospitality—Church Congress.

“Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd.”

The Consecration of Bishops.

“So he fed them with a faithful and true heart.”

PSALM lxxviii. 73.

EARLY in the year 1885, Edward Bickersteth was appointed to the Deanery of Gloucester, then vacant by the death of Dean Law. It was felt that such a post would give him leisure for literary work, as well as a higher vantage-ground for evangelistic and missionary labour. He would speak of his three R's, “Reading, Writing and Rest,” and how he would enjoy them. He went down to Gloucester to be instituted and to make arrangements for his removal thither. But it was not so to be. The particulars of the sudden interruption of his plans are best told in his own words.

On January 27, he wrote—

“ You will have heard of Gladstone's telegram ; his letter reaching me at Gloucester some half-hour before I was installed. It was too late to stop the

installation, for I had been instituted the day before. The letter told me that I would be offered an English See, one of two, either Lincoln or possibly Exeter. You will pray for me much that I may see and do the Master's will only. I had counted on rest, but if He says 'Work on till the time come,' His will is and must be best. How humbly and holily we ought as a family to walk with God!"

These words indicate the spirit in which he received the summons, and set himself to fulfil the responsibilities of the Episcopal office, responsibilities so vast as to justify the supposition of the author of the "Celestial Hierarchy," that whereas each Christian soul has its guardian angel, an archangel is deputed by God to guard and defend every Bishop of His Church.

On February 14, he wrote again—

"The rush of congratulations has subsided, though there is still a dropping fire of letters. I have not as yet had an answer from the Archbishop as to the day of my consecration. I hope it will be April 25, for confirmations begin on May 11."

He sent a letter to all the Clergy of his future Diocese of Exeter begging their prayers, both on the day of his consecration and during the interim.

A letter of March 14, tells of the loving present—table, writing-case, lamp, and a testimonial of £1000—to be given him at the ensuing Easter Vestry on April 9, and "then best of all, a Bickersteth Memorial Hall for a Mission Room, Workmen's Coffee Room and Institute, at the cost of some

£2600, on White Bear Green ; so mercies abound.”
And a few days later he says—

“ We had a most heart-warming day yesterday : the Church thronged and a Thankoffering for the innumerable mercies which we had received as pastor and flock for the last thirty years. It amounted to £108 18s. and was devoted to inscribe John Tucker’s name on the Memorial tablet of the C.M.S. House.”¹

He made a farewell visit to Gloucester, where he took the Holy Week Services in the Cathedral, and preached several times, so that he might feel he had done something for those people to whom, in the providence of God, he had been called to minister, albeit recalled at once.

On St. Mark’s day, 1885, he was consecrated as Bishop of Exeter, in St. Paul’s Cathedral, together with Dr. Edward King, the new Bishop of Lincoln. The presenting Bishops for him were his predecessor, Dr. Temple, Bishop of London, and Dr. Thorold, Bishop of Rochester. The preacher, Canon Liddon, delivered a famous discourse on the Episcopal Office, a masterpiece of reasoned eloquence and illuminated erudition which thrilled his vast audience, including those who could not follow him in all his conclusions.

Bishop Bickersteth did homage on his appointment to the See of Exeter, and on May 6, he reached Devonshire, where he spent his first night at Sowton Rectory with Archdeacon Sanders, it being the custom for a Bishop of Exeter, when newly consecrated, to enter the city for his

¹ See Missionary Chapter.

enthronement. At this ceremony which was very impressive, he gave an address upon the words, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts," words which struck the keynote of his Episcopate, words in which he cast himself upon the sympathy and prayers of the Diocese.

As he went in and out amongst clergy and laity, there was the impression left everywhere, which is best expressed in the words of the Shunamite respecting Elisha, "Behold, now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God which passeth by us continually," and this impression grew and deepened unto the end.

Of no man could it be more truly said that "the lines had fallen to him in pleasant places." Devonshire was to him an enchanted land, with its unrivalled scenery of river, coast and moor, its wonderful charm of quiet vales and wooded slopes. No one loved better—

"Its show of mountain hoary ;
Winding shore and deepening glen ;
Where the landscape in its glory,
Teaches truth to wandering men."

Nature was to him the sanctuary of the Eternal, and his poetic instincts, imbued as they were by the grace of God, enabled him to enjoy to the full the wealth of beauty and grandeur which his journeys up and down the Diocese opened out to him. None could find more to calm and cheer, to soothe and subdue, in places which were the constant scene of his official duties. He held that nothing was so helpful, as he once said in speaking on the 19th

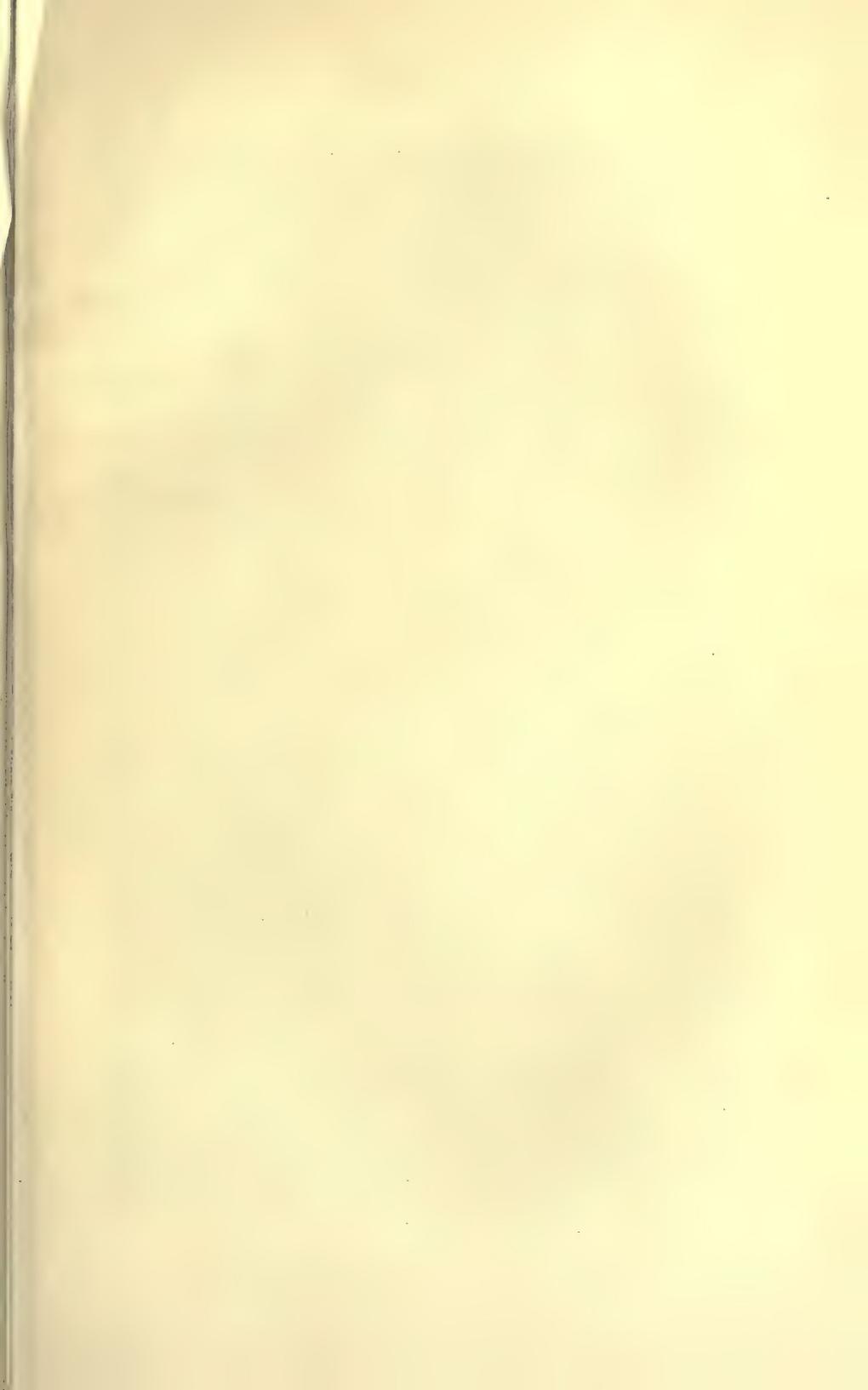




Photo : J. Valentine and Sons, Ltd.

EXETER CATHEDRAL AND BISHOP'S PALACE.

Psalm, "as the balanced contemplation of the works and word of God," which he illustrated from the structure of the Psalm itself. Shortly after coming to Devonshire, the Mayor of Tiverton at a dinner said to him, "Bishop, you are a great traveller; have you made up your mind where the Garden of Eden was?" "Certainly," was the reply. "Do let us know." "Why, Devonshire!"

Nor did he less highly prize "the goodly heritage" of church, civic and county life upon which he entered as chief pastor of the ancient See of the West. The Cathedral was eloquent to him, of churchmen, citizens, patriots, who had served their generation according to the Will of God, many of them indeed, "leaving footprints on the sands of time," the rest consisting of those whose names, though forgotten amongst men, are in everlasting remembrance, being written in the Book of Life.

Edward Bickersteth succeeded to a bishopric which had great traditions, his immediate predecessors Frederick Temple and Henry Philpotts having been mighty and masterful prelates. And it may be truly said that no Bishop ever rendered a more ungrudging homage to the greatness and goodness of the man whom he succeeded. He used to speak of him as "a king of men," and Dr. Temple who had not known him before his appointment, said to a friend after seeing him for the first time, "That man will do: he is so transparently good."

Only a very cursory review of Bishop Bickersteth's administration of the Diocese can be given

within the limits of this book. The main features of it, however, may be sketched and then illustrated by extracts from his letters and public utterances.

It may be well to begin with his confirmations. Of these he wrote on May 23, 1885—

“I have taken now six Confirmations, and I think that I shall enjoy this work the most. It is more like my old pastoral dealings with young hearts. . . . I especially enjoyed confirmation work on Friday and yesterday. At Coleridge, a ruinous church, its walls green with mould and windows blocked with broken shutters, there were some warm loving hearts, and I have promised to begin a subscription list for restoration, as it was my first confirmation.”

He valued most highly the opportunities, thus afforded him, of getting into personal touch with the rank and file of the laity in his Diocese. Everywhere hearts were won by his true fatherliness. All were attracted by his earnestness, by the power with which he realized the love of Christ both to himself and to those amongst whom he came. None ever spoke with fuller belief “in the Fatherly Hand” which would ever be over His children, and of which the laying on of the Bishop’s hand was an abiding pledge and token.

He would ask the question of each candidate by name, if the numbers were not too large. He also gave a Memorial Card on which were happily chosen words of Scripture, with the prayer at the imposition of hands which all were exhorted to use for themselves every day. The Rural Dean in

each neighbourhood acted as his Chaplain when he confirmed.

The Confirmations averaged about one hundred and twenty a year, and the total number of those upon whom he laid hands during fifteen years was between seventy and eighty thousand. He was greatly concerned for the welfare of the boys on the *Britannia*, *Impregnable*, and the *Lion*, which were training ships for the Royal Navy, and his confirmations when he visited them were most impressive.

An experience of some years before his promotion to the Episcopate, in the conduct of Quiet Days and Retreats for the Clergy, had equipped him in a remarkable degree for his ordination work. He ordained at Trinity and Advent in his cathedral. He felt that those who were set apart for the ministry should be sent forth from thence as the centre of Church Life in the Diocese. The candidates assembled on the Thursday in Ember week, and were entertained at the Palace. They were addressed by the Bishop himself on the first evening, and the following days were filled up with services, papers on pastoral subjects, and interviews with the Bishop and his examining Chaplains. Each day began with the Holy Communion and a short address, the other devotional exercises being Matins, a quiet hour in chapel conducted by one of the chaplains, and Evensong with an address. Some time was also set apart for meditation and prayer. The Bishop himself gave the tone to the whole week, and did most to create and sustain the atmosphere of holy, restful calm,

which was so fitting a prelude to the great service of the following Sunday. Messages never to be forgotten were spoken by Bishop Earle, now Dean of Exeter, Principal Chavasse, now Bishop of Liverpool, Archdeacon Sandford, Bishop Trefusis, Chancellor Edmonds, Prebendary Ponsonby, and others. These were full days for the Bishop, who, in addition to the interviews with the candidates, read over the sermons which those to be ordained priests had sent in, besides the pastoral papers, which were very searching.

The influence of these conversations and criticisms has left its impress upon many a career, and the young men found in their Bishop a true father in God, to whom they might open their griefs and unburden their difficulties. Those Ember seasons live in the hearts of all whose great privilege it was to take any part in them.

Nor can the ordinations ever be forgotten by those who were present. The beautiful rendering of the service by the cathedral choir, the calm dignity of the Bishop, as with benign countenance and in accents of controlled emotion, he read the almost inspired and most inspiring service of ordination; the hushed stillness which pervaded the worshippers as the "Veni Creator" was sung, and the laying on of hands upon the white-robed candidates, all this it is impossible to describe. To many, those services in the Cathedral at Exeter seemed to approach very nearly to that ideal of an ordination which the English Church has given in her Prayer-book.

The Bishop insisted that the newly-ordained

clergy should have the remainder of the day for rest, and would not permit them to disperse to their parishes until the following morning, after an early Celebration with a few words of farewell.

The intellectual standard of the ordinaries at Exeter was above the average chiefly because of the Philpotts' Exhibitions for students at Oxford and Cambridge, which were awarded on condition that those who held them should be ordained at Exeter and remain in the diocese for two years. Thus not a few able men were attracted from the Universities.

Three hundred and six deacons, and three hundred and thirty one priests, were ordained during the Bishop's tenure of the See.

Another noteworthy feature of his *régime* was the method which he adopted in instituting clergy to their various spheres of labour. The ceremony took place in the chapel at the Palace, when he gave singularly apt addresses, emphasizing the solemnity of the occasion, and impressing those admitted with the dignity and responsibility which attached to their several charges.

His personal influence with the clergy was noteworthy, particularly with those who, in his judgment, had carried their ritual beyond the limits laid down by the Prayer-book. He honoured saintly and devoted clergy of every school, but he felt that he must be faithful to his episcopal vows, and call upon men, however earnest they might be, to conform both to the formal regulations of the Church of England and to the spirit in which those regulations had been drawn up.

Those who came to speak with him on such points realized that they had to do, not with the lofty dignitary, or their ecclesiastical superior, but with a real father in God, who regarded his clergy with a loving affection. Prejudice was disarmed, reserve melted away, and the air was cleared for helpful discussion of the matters at issue. The spirit in which the High Church Clergy of the Diocese, almost without an exception, deferred to his wishes as their Bishop was honourable alike to him and to themselves. He had much cause for thankfulness in his efforts to promote the peace of the Church in his own jurisdiction. He wrote thus to one of his clergy :—

“ I have read your touching letter of Friday last ; but I have never been able to swerve from my duty, as expressed by me at our Diocesan Conference. My own judgment coincides with the Archbishop’s decision on Incense, Lights, and the Reservation of the Sacrament. I had already spoken of this provision in the Prayer-book for an appeal to the Archbishop of the Province. I said, ‘ It may be that in course of time the laws of the Church of England will be altered, and permit reservation with strict safeguards to prevent abuses ; but that at present I felt obedience to the Archbishop’s rulings was essential.’ Your own obedience to me, as your Bishop, has materially helped me, and I cannot but feel our Heavenly Father has looked lovingly upon your submission and faith ; your most affectionate father in God,—

E. H. EXON.”

And as there are sheep in every flock which go astray, so, alas ! there are to be met with in the

Church, pastors who have fallen from their first estate, and become the sorest hindrance to their flocks as well as a reproach to their sacred calling. Sometimes it is impossible to bring such offenders under the operation of the Church's law, and they have remained in their parishes for years. Happily such cases have been rare. Bishop Bickersteth, although he could rebuke with severity when occasion required, was able by his gentle, persuasive entreaties to bring about retirement, in some cases, where argument and authority would have been powerless. Meanwhile, he himself would go to such a parish and hold services there, considering himself the Pastor of the Church.

The Cathedral Church naturally occupied the Bishop's first thought in coming to the Diocese. He had carefully read Archbishop Benson's "Ideals of a Cathedral," and he sought to make his own Cathedral a centre from which manifold influences and activities might radiate throughout the Diocese, whilst all its parishes and institutions could turn to it for guidance, inspiration and assistance. An interplay of forces might thus be set in motion which would tend to keep the life of the Church strong and fresh.

The opportunity was soon given him to carry out such an ideal. The Chapter at Exeter was composed of old men whose term of service had nearly run out. Within a comparatively short time, he was called upon to fill all the Residentiary Canonries. The elevation of Archdeacon Earle to the episcopate, and the death of Archdeacon Barnes shortly after his installation, entailed the

appointment to two of the Canonries a second time.

The Bishop stipulated that the Canons should resign their pastoral cures, and devote themselves to some branch of diocesan work. To one Canon he assigned the care of Education, to another the promotion of Foreign Missions, to another the furtherance of Home Missions, and to the fourth the encouragement of study amongst the Clergy. His expectations were largely realized, and he would speak of his Canons with pride and thankfulness.

Having spared no pains to find the right men, he gave them the freest scope, and his entire support. In Archdeacon Sandford he found a man for the times, an expert on education. Canon Trefusis (afterwards his assistant Bishop), Canon Atherton, and Chancellor Edmonds, did much to carry out the Bishop's ideal of the work of a Cathedral Chapter for the Diocese. His relations also with the Deans who presided over the Chapter during his episcopate were very cordial. He threw himself heartily into the effort to provide a new organ for the Cathedral, and his influence did much in obtaining the large sum of money which was required.

Mention should also be made of the late Arthur Burch, Esq., whom he appointed his Diocesan Registrar, and whom he greatly valued as a personal friend and adviser. A sound lawyer, his sober cautious judgment and intimate knowledge of the West were freely placed at the service of his Bishop and the Diocese.

He had also the satisfaction of offering the chancellorship of the Diocese to an old parishioner at Hampstead in the person of Sir Lewis Dibdin, now Dean of Arches.

The Bishop worked the Diocese through his Rural Deans. He aimed at visiting a certain number of Rural Deaneries every year, going oftenest to the Three Towns, the most populous centre under his charge.

A well-known Plymouth layman, writing in 1888, said :—

“The great benefit of the division (of Exeter Diocese) has been that the Bishop has been able to visit every part of the Diocese more frequently, and to stay longer and show himself more among the people ; and there can be no doubt that the presence of a bishop among the people does produce a very great effect. Our Bishop spent ten days here last January, meeting the churchwardens, the Sunday school teachers, and other church workers, as well as the clergy, and visiting the schools, the hospitals, and the workhouse. *All this did incalculable good.*”

He visited 450 out of the 510 parishes in the Diocese, some of his holidays being spent in Devonshire, which enabled him to see something of the more retired parishes where his visitations had not extended. Once a year the Rural Deans met at the Palace for devotion and conference. Their visit coincided with one of the large gatherings composed of workers and others, whom the Bishop entertained at the Palace.

One of the main responsibilities of his office was

the dispensing of patronage. His own appointments were now and then freely criticized, but no one ever questioned his singleness of mind. He took time to inquire and to consider, but when he had come to a decision, in dependence always upon God, he was bold and never flinched. He felt that the Church at home should recognize the claims of those who came back from the Mission field, and, where possible, provide them spheres of service. He sent a retired Missionary, of whose capacity and devotedness he was well assured, to one of the better endowed parishes in his gift. Those who had appointments to make often consulted him, and their confidence in his judgment frequently led them to appoint his nominee. He stood aloof from considerations of party, in this as well as other matters connected with the administration of the Diocese.

Lord Salisbury, when Prime Minister, would consult him not only as to appointments to benefices in his own Diocese, but also as to other and higher preferments.

Any page from his book of engagements would show how "he abounded in the work of the Lord" in a multitude of ways. He was president of the Missionary Guild of St. Paul for work in Japan, and also of the Home and Colonial School Society, an institution for training teachers on Evangelical lines, for work at home and abroad. He pleaded the causes of all the diocesan societies and institutions besides the Pastoral Aid, the Additional Curates, the Church Missionary Societies: the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, the Church of England Temperance Society, and others. He once held a drawing-room meeting at the Palace for the Palestine Exploration Fund. The Deaconess's House of Refuge owed its recovery from a serious crisis to his strenuous advocacy. He summoned a Conference of all the Union Chaplains, at which the spiritual provision already made, or still required in the Workhouses of Devonshire, was discussed.

No account of the Bishop would be complete which did not mention his strong and persistent efforts for the promotion of Sunday Observance. He lifted up his voice in Convocation against resolutions which he felt would tend to weaken a cause so dear to his heart. He used to say, "There are two sacred ordinances which have come down to us from Eden, Holy Marriage the bond of human love, and the Holy Day of Rest binding men to God."

The apostolic precept "A Bishop must be given to hospitality" found in Bishop Bickersteth one who greatly delighted to fulfil it. For many years he entertained every summer, immense gatherings of various kinds at his house. Churchwardens and their wives, Day School Teachers, Sunday School Teachers, Organists and Choirs, Hospital Nurses, Lay Readers, Nonconformist Ministers, Bell Ringers, Policemen, Railway Servants, and Aged Persons, all from the Diocese partook of his hospitality.

Luncheon was served in a marquee on the lawn

of the Palace Garden, and the afternoon, with an interval for the Cathedral service and an address by the Bishop which all were quite free to attend or not, was spent in the Palace and grounds. Tea followed later, at which there were brief speeches. One of the most interesting of these occasions was that upon which the Nonconformist ministers throughout the County were invited, of whom more than two hundred came. Such intercourse tended to promote kindly feeling, and to allay bitterness between those who loved their Lord, and yet could not see eye to eye upon many vital subjects.

As this gathering of Nonconformist Ministers was one of unusual interest, a more detailed account of it may be given. The Bishop wrote the following letter of invitation to all the Evangelical Nonconformist Ministers in the Diocese.

The Palace, Exeter, 4th June.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have long felt, with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, that it is greatly to be desired there should be more opportunities of social intercourse between the Clergy of the Church of England and their brethren in Christ, who are the Ministers of other Religious Communities.

"As a humble effort towards the promotion of this fraternal intercourse, I am venturing to ask all the Nonconformist Ministers resident in Devon to meet some of the Clergy of my Diocese on Tuesday, July 7. I shall hope to have the privilege of introducing to them six representative brother Ministers from Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, and America, who will be spending

two days with me that week (D.V.), after the Evangelical Alliance Jubilee Commemoration, which will be held June 28 to July 4, in London.

"I hope our friends will be able to gather by noon or shortly after, so that a Brief Devotional Meeting may be held in the Palace garden, in which I trust some of my guests will kindly take part. Luncheon will be at 1.15, and there will be a Service in the Cathedral at 3 o'clock, at which the presence of any who desire to attend will be most welcome. This will be followed by an inspection of the Cathedral, the Chapter House and Library, and afternoon tea at 5 o'clock.

"May I hope that you will give me the pleasure of your company on that day?

"Yours in our One Lord,

"Most sincerely,

"E. H. EXON."

The programme outlined in the above letter was carried out much to the satisfaction both of the Bishop and of his guests. He addressed them as follows:—

"My Brothers in Christ Jesus, most sincerely do I thank you for your presence to-day, and most heartily do I welcome you in our dear Master's Name. I have had the kindest replies to my invitation from almost all those who are unable to be with us to-day, saying how they would be one with us in spirit and in prayer.

"Let me read but two letters, assuring you that they only breathe the spirit of very many responses; one from an aged Nonconformist Minister, the Rev. James Ellis, of Ilfracombe, and another from a lay Churchman in the stress of work. A very large number are prevented from being with us, by being away from home, in their

summer holiday month, and some I grieve to say, from sickness, and many from previous engagements which they could not forego.

“Then I have the great pleasure of introducing to you some Brothers in Christ from far-off lands, who came to England for the Evangelical Alliance Conference held this week in London, and have been good enough to honour us with their presence to-day.

“Pasteur Theodore Monod from France.

“Rev. Pastor Correva from Germany.

“Dr. Comba from Italy.

“Dr. Edouard Naville from Switzerland, a distinguished Egyptian Explorer.

“Dr. Garth Van Wyk from Holland.

“W. E. Dodge, Esq., from the United States, where he is the President of the Evangelical Alliance.

“A. J. Arnold, Esq., the long-tried and trusted Secretary of the Alliance.

“Pasteur François Coillard, a devoted Missionary from Africa.

“We bid them one and all welcome for Christ’s sake.

“We do not meet to-day to express conformity in Church discipline, for therein we differ in many things. But we do meet to evidence our confraternity in the fundamental verities of the everlasting Gospel, for therein we are one and shall be one for ever.

“Wherein we differ, we desire, as the inspired apostle beseeches us, with all lowliness and meekness and long suffering to forbear one another in love. And wherein we are one, we are endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; for we know there is one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all

and in us all. And we recognize that to each there is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

"In bidding most hearty welcome to our Nonconformist brethren from Devon, and to the delegates of the Evangelical Alliance so happily with us to-day, I would couple the names of the Rev. Dr. Macpherson, of Exeter, and W. E. Dodge, Esq., of the United States."

In August, 1893, he wrote to his son and chaplain from Nevin :—

"A good many letters but nothing very urgent. The worst was on Tuesday morning from Archdeacon Sandford, forwarding one from Archdeacon Emery. They want the Church Congress to be at Exeter in 1894. Alas, alas ! but we must, if it comes, throw ourselves heartily into it and look for a blessing which will not be denied us."¹

The year was spent in vigorous preparation, clergy and laity alike giving the heartiest co-operation to the undertaking. And when the time came, many causes contributed to bring about a very successful issue. The weather was propitious, and a large number of good speakers,

¹ The Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Thorold, who had been asked to take part in the Congress, wrote :—

"The Deanery, Winchester, October 23, 1893.

"**MY DEAR BROTHER,**

"Vigorous is the adjective for your address. It must have stirred and inspired the Conference. As to your Congress next year, *nous verrons*. One condition is indispensable—that I am alive. A very much wounded bird hardly likes to look across the next hedge. I live and work with my life in my hands ; and though bacillus is not on my nerves, he is plentiful in nature. I was very sorry not to see your son. He is as able as he is good.

Your affectionate friend,

A. W."

both clerical and lay, took part in the proceedings. The Bishop's opening speech was one of the most effective ever delivered at such an assemblage. As a rule he was not at his best as a platform speaker, but he could rise to the exigencies of a great occasion.

The following were the main subjects of the Congress address. He said—

"Our manifold subjects will, I believe, mainly revolve around the two foci of Church Reform and the Church's Mission. They are inseparably connected. One axis, *Thy Will be done in us and by us*, runs through them both. And, indeed, it is only an oblique section of the cone which presents us with the two foci of an ellipse. When the section is parallel with the base of the cone, a perfect circle is the result, and the two foci coalesce and form the one centre from which all lines radiate. Our basis is the Word of Truth. Our sections of thought are, I trust, becoming more and more parallel with it, and as we pray believably, 'Let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend Thy Church, that it may be devoutly given to serve Thee in all good works,' Church Reform and the Church's Mission, will be more and more fused into one, till they both find their consummation in the fulfilment of the prayer—

"*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

After pointing out that he would limit his words "to the need of perfecting that sifting and solid Church Reform" which had already been begun, he said that if this were done, we as Churchmen should be able to gird up our loins and obey what the Iron Duke called "our Marching

Orders." The secret of our not having done more to evangelize the world, was to be found in the want of more solid Church reform.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM

With reference to Biblical criticism, the following words show the Bishop was not afraid of that which is of a reverent and serious kind.

"This faith of our fathers is our faith, and, God helping us, we will hand it down to our children, though it be tried with fire, without the loss of a single grain of gold. England's Church has never feared Biblical criticism when serious and reverent, and hence we stand on a far higher level than those who unconvinced, are compelled to submit, if not to subscribe, to the recent encyclical letter from the Vatican. . . . Of inferences drawn from insufficient premises the name is legion ; speculations and guesses there are without number ; plausible but unproved theories fall round us thick as the leaves of Vallombrosa. But of these, further research has exposed many ; the recent discoveries of travellers have refuted others ; and the arguments and surmises of agnostics consume one another in rapid succession. They breed with marvellous fecundity, but like Saturn, they devour their own children and the bleached bones only remain. . . .

"The reaction against hasty inference from uncertain discoveries, has already set in, and I doubt not will gradually become a solid reformation of thought ; for we are learning in Biblical criticism, as in many other things, 'to refuse the evil and choose the good,' and the words are engraven more deeply than ever on our hearts,

‘In your patience ye shall win your souls.’ If Cicero could say, ‘Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat,’ we respond with the inspired seer, ‘The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever.’”

SUPERANNUATION OF THE CLERGY

The words on this subject created notice at the time, and are emphasized by the fact that the Bishop himself acted six years later on the advice then given.

“The compulsory retirement of superannuated and disabled clergy is still unattained, and yet no departmental authorities, military or civil, would tolerate men retaining responsible posts which demand active service, when they could no longer discharge the duties appertaining to those posts.

“In our Navy and Army, officers are obliged to retire at a certain age according to their rank. No manager of a bank, no director of a railway, no surgeon or physician of a hospital, holds on to his place when superannuated or disabled. But if clergymen of all ranks, bishops, deans, archdeacons, canons, incumbents, curates, were obliged to resign at three score years and ten, unless they could produce a medical certificate from a nominated physician in the diocese, that they appeared fully able to continue their episcopal or clerical work for the next twelve months, a certificate to be renewed year by year, it would relieve the Church from many burdens; and promotions would be healthily accelerated. Those who resigned would pass from the Executive to the Consultative ranks of the clergy; but not a few would easily claim, and annually renew their certificate of health and strength

until they passed four score years and more, and haply their last works would be among their fruitfullest and best. There is a prelate¹ on our bench over ninety years of age, whose unwearied labours would surpass the powers of many a man of sixty. Still, the criterion I have named would meet the most serious cases of superannuation. And if this retirement from active ministry were foreseen by the clergy, *prevision* would beget *provision*. They would generally insure their lives for a sum to be paid at death, or on attaining seventy years, and when such an insurance is effected in early manhood, the additional yearly premium is very small. Now, if besides this, all clergymen upon their ordination, were obliged to subscribe to a society such as the Clergy Pensions Institution, which is making rapid and solid progress . . . they would receive a substantial annuity at the age of sixty-five."

The Bishop closed with a reference to a third source of income in the allowance granted under the Incumbents' Resignation Act.

EDUCATION

"The Church is called to act *in loco parentis* to the children of our fatherland. The Master's pastoral charge to St. Peter, 'Feed my lambs,' comes before 'Shepherd my sheep.' And what is education without religion? I was sitting, as a young man, some fifty years ago by my father's side in a great educational meeting at Norwich, when an advocate for secular education harped on the words, *educate, educate, educate*, as the one panacea for all our social ills. I well remember

¹ Bishop Durnford of Chichester.

my father's saying to me, 'Let them educate the children ever so much, without religion they will never make them so clever as the Devil.'

"England, as a nation, abhors secularism, and those who know teachers and parents best, can testify to their warm and genuine gratitude for definite religious instruction being required in our schools. The minority who oppose it are loud-throated; but for all that their voice is not the voice of England. As to the financial maintenance of Church schools, subscribers to all inspected and accredited voluntary schools for the working classes, whether Protestant or Roman, or Jewish schools, surely ought to be allowed on producing a receipt, to deduct the amount of their subscriptions from the Board School rates. It is unequal and unjust to tax or squeeze philanthropists in both ways."

TEMPERANCE

"While I earnestly hope the temptations to drunkenness will be extensively reduced by the suppression of needless public houses (compensation being allowed to every interest involved), I confess my hopes lie mainly in the direction of the Bishop of Chester's Bill, which recognizes that the public house of entertainment is necessary for the comfort, recreation, and social intercourse of the people, and that reform, rather than abolition, must be the aim of a sound temperance policy. And for this, the placing of licensed victualling should be in public hands, giving to their management the character of a public trust, and eliminating, as far as possible, the motive of private gain; in fact, the Gottenberg system adapted to English customs and English society. Intemperance is a national abscess; the abscess requires the surgeon's lancet, but the nation needs the food of wholesome recreation and refreshing society."

FOREIGN MISSIONS

A vigorous appeal for greater missionary enterprise was a keynote of the address.

"We need not revolutionize systems of missions which have worked well, or substitute new ideal systems which some think would work better; the best is, after all, the enemy of the good. Probably now the Church of England cannot do evangelistic work more efficiently than through the two great missionary confederations, the S.P.G. or the C.M.S. with their many younger sister societies. But ought she not to double her missionary forces before the 20th century dawns (that is in rather more than six years), and account this as only an earnest of far greater things? Is it too much to say that if we gave one-tenth of our clergy and their faithful lay helpers to the manifold mission fields (sorely as we should miss them at home) England's Church would be the gainer, not the loser; for the blood, which is the life, would course more freely through her veins?

"If we were making disciples of all nations, it would be our strongest Church defence, a mighty magnet for home reunion, a signal to the ends of the earth. 'The Lord is at hand.' Some devoted men would go forth in brotherhood as members of community missions; some holy women would go as deaconesses or sisters; neither men nor women I hope bound by vows of celibacy. That saintly French prelate of the 17th century, Nicholas Pavillon, Bishop D'Alet, entirely prohibited the goodly fellowship of sisters he gathered round him and employed in his Diocese, from taking vows, feeling as he wrote to the Princess de Conti, 'It is better to serve God with a full

heart and a mind at liberty, than to expose yourself to the temptation of regretting the sacrifice, which you have irrevocably made, *and which you may make with freedom daily.*" Doubtless both married and unmarried missionaries are needed."

MOBILIZATION OF FORCES

"Mobilization of forces has proved itself a most essential factor in modern strategy. In the Franco-German War of 1870, France was conquered not only by the greatest of Emperors and by Bismarck, the ablest of diplomatists, but also by Moltke, who with mathematical precision had wrought out the plan of the campaign before a shot was fired. Japan is teaching the nations of the far east the same lesson both by land and sea. Has the Church Militant learned how, rightly and rapidly, to mobilize her missionary forces?"

"CATHOLIC PARTY"

"As the phrase 'Catholic Party' has been twice used this morning, I must, as President, say that the two things seem to me inconsistent, Catholic and Party. We are members of the Holy Catholic Church. Can a party be Catholic?"



THE BISHOP WITH TWO OF HIS GRANDCHILDREN, 1886.



CHAPTER V

1885-1900

Home life at Exeter—Letters—Lambeth Conference—Death of Bishop Edward Bickersteth of South Tokyo—Recollections—Presentation of portrait.

“True to the kindred points of heaven and home.”
WORDSWORTH.

SOME account of the Bishop’s home life at Exeter will follow appropriately upon the description in the preceding chapter, of his public work. Its main sources are letters written by him to his son, Bishop Edward Bickersteth in Japan, and recollections of members of his family, and of others who had frequent intercourse with him. The exigencies of a busier life did not allow time for letters such as he had written in his Hampstead days, but they give an outlook upon things from another stand-point and reveal “the hidden man of the heart,” in one who touched the life of his time on many sides.

He writes on January 13, 1887 :—

“Our hearts are so full of the sudden death of our friend and neighbour Lord Iddesleigh ; we can think of little else. Only last Friday, he spoke at our Queen’s Jubilee County Meeting for three-quarters of an hour in a masterly speech. I helped him to put his coat on after the meeting, for which he thanked me so gracefully. Last Monday I had a quarter of an hour with him in his study, in which

he spoke so brightly of China and Japan, and now that busy brain and loving heart, which have wrought and beat so warmly for England for forty years of statesmanship, are still. I have to preach at Upton Pynes, his little Parish Church, on Sunday next, and think of speaking on the words, ‘David, after he had served his generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.’ I am sure Lord Iddesleigh served his generation right faithfully. We have lost a true friend in him, and England and the Empire a sagacious watchman and peacemaker. Happily we may sing—

“O God our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come.”

“July 13, 1887.

“Yesterday I was preaching at Martinhoe in the afternoon, such a rustic church, on ‘Stretch forth thine hand.’ A thought which has been in my mind lately is this:

“‘I ought, I can, I will.’

“‘I can because I ought,’ for God never lays an impossible duty upon us, and then ‘I will’ because ‘I ought and can.’”

On December 26, 1889, he writes:—

“Yesterday I preached on ‘We know that the Son of God has come’ (1 John v. 20), the Incarnation, the pledge of all that Divine love has done and has promised to do for us, and the key to the dark riddles and mysterious providences of our Lord, in our pilgrim life. I spoke a few words on that which I know must have struck a deep chord of sympathy and sorrow in your heart, as in ours, the death of dear Bishop Lightfoot. I know how you loved him, how deep the debt you feel you owe him. But I said one thing in passing which

S. warmly thanked me for in the vestry. ‘If it were not for the communion of the mystical body of Christ in earth and heaven, we should say how inestimably poorer the Church was for the loss of that luminous mind, that evenly balanced judgment, that richly stored memory. But the Church never loses any of her wealth. It is of God and in God’s keeping.’ You felt on what a slender thread his life hung, when you left England. But the Master Sculptor had the finishing touches to put to His work, and now we can only say, ‘It is the Lord.’”

“Upper House of Convocation, February 6, 1891.”

“My ordination day as deacon, 1848. What a retrospect of mercies and shortcomings! It has been an interesting Convocation, principally about brotherhoods and sisterhoods. I do not like dispensable vows, and am fortified by Bishop Lightfoot’s protest not two years ago. In the first place, I do not believe anybody ought to take lifelong vows of this character when he cannot foresee the future: nor do I believe that a Bishop has such a dispensing power, regarding a vow made to God. The whole matter seems to me to lie ‘in foro conscientiae.’

“I had a conversation with the Archbishop yesterday, *re* the possibility of a suffragan. He will patiently consider it, but evidently feels the clergy do not like suffragans as they do their own temporal bishops.”

“March 20, 1891.

“Now that I am treading the border land of old age, the mighty verities of the Cross and the Resurrection, seem more impregnable and more necessary. When flesh and heart must at the longest soon fail, the Crucified and Risen Incarnate God is alone our strength and portion for ever. I

am glad you are studying Leighton. The inimitable charm of his writing is, of course, not his Churchmanship, but that refined and cultured heavenly-mindedness, which rises above the needful lines of demarcation, within which we must work ‘until the day dawn and the shadows flee away.’”

In August 1891, the Bishop, accompanied by his wife and one of his daughters, started on a journey to Japan. Besides the joy of visiting his son, Bishop Edward Bickersteth, of South Tokyo, there was one object very dear to his heart, “to see how his brethren did in the mission field.” A description of this journey, which was in a very real sense a missionary journey, is reserved for the chapter on his missionary work.

On January 14, 1892, he writes :—

“The death of the Duke of Clarence, at 9 a.m., is filling our hearts to-day. There is something inexpressibly sad in one who was counting on his wedding next month (and the bride-elect under the roof at Sandringham), called so suddenly away. The national sympathy is intense. There has been nothing like it since the Prince of Wales’ illness twenty years ago. I am to preach on it next Sunday in the Cathedral (D.V.), and think of taking the words, ‘The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of God shall stand for ever.’”

“June 16, 1892.

“We had our meeting of Western Bishops ; two came, but ‘Ubi tres, ibi ecclesia.’ We always have our spiritual subject, and it fell to me to suggest and to open it. It was on the special perils which beset us as Bishops, and the special

privileges which are ours (1) in preaching, (2) in confirming, (3) in ordaining, (4) in correspondence, (5) in shepherding the shepherds, (6) in society, (7) in exercising discipline, (8) in dealing with Non-conformists, (9) in fulfilling the office of Father in God to the lay people."

"September 1, 1892.

"Spent last Sunday at Princetown, and confirmed twenty-two of the prisoners. I think I told you of my friend 'the king of the burglars' whom I confirmed five years ago. He is a convict under a life sentence for firing at and dangerously wounding a policeman and a postman, when rifling a house in London. I asked after him, and was so thankful to hear that he was staunch and true. The chaplain told me that the first religious impression was made upon him when committing a burglary at Brighton. The plan of the house was given him, and he was told off to break into it. He got in, and, dark lantern in hand, entered a young lady's bedroom, took her watch and gold ornaments from her dressing-table and mantelpiece; and then turning on a little light, he saw in a cheval looking-glass that she was sitting up in bed and watching him. He turned the light down, but as he passed her bed in leaving the room, he felt her hand laid on his shoulder, and she said, 'Have you a mother?' It struck him 'all of a heap'—he said, 'Yes, I have.' 'Do you,' she asked, 'love your mother?' He said, 'I do.' 'Well, then,' she said, 'I have a mother in the next room. Will you promise you won't go in there? I know the fright would kill her, for she is weak and ill; promise me.' He promised, and she began to speak to him about his course of life. He felt cowed, and he put down her watch and all he had taken on the floor, and said to her, 'I won't trouble anything in this house.' And at once he left the house, and though he returned to

his predatory life in London, he never forgot it. The simple story struck me much.

“Our poor gardener died quite suddenly in our garden at Exeter yesterday : He was a true Christian servant with but one talent which he faithfully laid out, and I doubt not entered into the joy of his Lord.”

“October 13, 1892.

“The *Times* yesterday put in a letter I wrote on Tennyson’s mother’s funeral. There had been profound feeling in the public mind, which I am persuaded is a tribute to the real faith Tennyson had in God and His Word and his Gospel, and the sweet home-purity he loved and sung.

“I am sorry A. shrinks from Holy Orders after all ! Perhaps longer experience of life will convince him of the blessed power for influencing which τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, through the laying on of hands, brings.

“I send you Henry Martyn’s new life ; the book is an immense improvement on its predecessor, though I still feel Martyn did not walk in all the freedom wherewith Christ makes His servants free ; and yet more strongly feel his ‘Lydia’ ought to have gone out to him.”

“January 17, 1894.

“I was so deeply interested in your mapping out the vast Empire of Japan with the American Bishop, for Christ. His it is, and shall be for ever. It reminds me of the command to Abraham, ‘Arise, walk through the land in the length of it : for I will give it unto Thee.’”

“February 9, 1894.

“I have been reading with deepest interest Dean Church’s Oxford Movement. It is most masterly as all his writings are, most vivid, most

helpful in many things, but alas ! (though unintentionally I am sure, for he was ever a lover of truth), most defective and unjust to the grand Evangelical Revival in the Church of England from 1780 to 1830. I doubt not his estimate was from want of knowledge and research, for I am sure there have seldom been 50 years of nobler triumphs of the working of the Spirit of God on human hearts, in the long history of the Church's warfare. Men like Henry Venn, and Wilberforce, and Henry Martyn, and Scott, and Simeon, and Biddulph, and Cecil, men who laid the foundations of the C.M.S., certainly the most warrior-like army of the soldiers of the cross which the Church has known for many centuries, are not to be passed over with the sneering criticisms of good Dean Church, blessed man as he was. Oh ! for largeness of heart to grasp the good of all good men ! for all are ours, and I have ever felt the three great Revivals, the Evangelical Revival, the Missionary Revival, the Church Revival, are interlinked inseparably, and call for the adoring thanks of all lovers of the truth."

" May 23, 1894.

" Last week was a crowded week with an ordination. But I do not think in all the 19 ordinations held here on the Trinity Sundays and in Advent since I came in 1885, we have ever had such a delightful set of men ; all graduates, 12 from Cambridge, 9 from Oxford, 2 from Dublin ; but all so thoughtful and spiritual, and all so grateful for the quiet restfulness of the 3½ days."

" June 26, 1894.

We had the most delightful meeting of Rural Deans, Canons, and Archdeacons last Wednesday and Thursday. It was quite an intellectual feast, as well as a social luxury. It was followed by the meeting of organists from all parts of my Diocese,

for luncheon, conversazione, wandering over our house, a perfect musical service in the Cathedral, and then returning for tea in the garden. All was sunshine and mercy."

"Cromer, August 30, 1894.

"I preached at Banningham to a thronged Church full, [indeed they were standing outside the windows], on the 'Exceeding great and precious promises given to us' (2 Peter i.). It was touching to see the loving remembrance of those among whom I laboured 46 years ago ; but few remain to greet me ; still tradition is strong."

"October 4, 1894.

"I hope to be able to send you an early copy of my opening address [at the Congress] by to-night's mail. I have touched on so many debatable questions, I dare say I shall be harshly criticised. Still, if the Master approves, that is all, and I am very thankful to have interwoven Church Reform and the Church's Mission to non-Christian lands."

"Tintagel, Cornwall, October 18, 1894.

"Here we are, and have been since Monday, in the quietest, freshest retreat possible, in small but very comfortable lodgings after all the incessant press of last Congress week. We cannot be really thankful enough for the wonderful blessing which seemed to rest on every day's work from the 7th to the 14th, inclusive. Surely God heard and answered our prayers. Of course, in so large and free an outpouring of so many minds and hearts, there were things said, which, to use Coleridge's words, 'did not find me.' But there was no bitterness, except there was a groan or two in 'Father Ignatius' reply to Professor Driver which I did not hear. Still I am sure it was wiser to let him speak (and told Bishop Barry, who was

chairman, so before hand), and, viewing the Congress as a whole, there was a noble testimony to the truth.

“The Friday morning devotional service in the Cathedral, when Professor Swete, the Rev. W. H. Hutchings, and H. E. Fox (Durham), and the Bishop of Truro, gave four addresses with a hymn and collects between each, all bearing on ‘The Doctrine and Dispensation of the Holy Spirit,’ was to my mind the most delightful of all, and I can only pray that the whole Congress may be a spiritual epoch to myself in the late evening of my ministry.”

From the home of one who had lately lost her husband, he writes to his daughter—

“November 22, 1894.

“I have been telling her of the ever-widening circles of noble Christian ambition.

“(1) Our own walk with God.

“(2) Our home circle trained for God.

“(3) Our parish, the spot where He has placed us to be worked for Him.

“(4) Our Diocese, some special field chosen to cultivate. (I think she will take our Deaconess’s work under her influence here.)

“(5) The great Missionary work in far-off lands.”

“January 15, 1895.

“I am sure I ought to hold earth with a looser hand and heaven with a firmer grasp, now that I am on the verge of three score years and ten. But I find it hard to do this in such a Paradise of human love as God, in His great mercy, has made my lot.”

“June 20, 1895.

“On Monday and Tuesday we had the annual gathering of the Diocesan Missionaries in the

Cathedral, and at Canon Atherton's house and garden ; they numbered 60. Nine years ago, I said that of our 750 Clergymen in this Diocese, we might find one in ten capable of being Missioners, if they would stir up the gift of God which was in them. That would number 75, but it is a great mercy to have 60, or four-fifths of my asked-for fellow-workers."

"August 1, 1895.

" My great sorrow since I wrote has been the death of my dear, dear friend and brother, Bishop Thorold. For nearly forty years we have been friends, and now that he and dear French are gone, I feel more and more what a band of brothers are gathering on the other side of Jordan. Oh to be ready when the Master calls ! "

He writes on the death of his sister Charlotte, Mrs. Ward :—

"September 15, 1896.

" Last Wednesday I was by my precious sister. It was a singular, and to me most tender mercy, that she was conscious, and not only knew me, but took intense pleasure in my having come. I was indeed thankful to have been permitted to spend her last conscious hour of pilgrimage with her. It is 37 years since death entered my father's circle, my mother having passed away in 1859, and I am the oldest survivor of that generation."

Bishop Bickersteth took an active part in the proceedings of the Lambeth Conference in the early summer of 1897. He served as a member of Committees which were appointed to discuss and report upon questions bearing upon the Missionary

Work of the Church, and the Observance of Sunday.¹

Bishop Edward Bickersteth had returned home in broken health early in the year 1897. A partial recovery enabled him to take part, together with his father, in the Conference of Bishops, but a relapse took place, and the call to rest came on August 5th, just after the close of the Conference.² This heavy stroke was received by the Bishop with a submission to the will of God and a Christian patience which all who knew him felt beforehand that he would exhibit. He had all the consolation which widespread sympathy and many prayers could minister; and meanwhile, he continued "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." He never entirely recovered the spring and the buoyancy of the past; it was manifest that the blow had told heavily upon him.

The Palace at Exeter occupies an ideal site, nestling as it does under the shadow of the Cathedral Church. Its beautiful lawns and gardens, its fine old elms and shady walks, its enclosure to the east of the ancient City wall, give it a wonderful charm. The mellowed chimes of the bells at the hour of prayer, the sense of stillness and retirement after the throng and bustle of the streets near by, the loveliness of trees and flowers, and the sweet singing of birds, these elements of repose and refreshment made their irresistible appeal to such a mind as the Bishop's.

To no occasion during his life at Exeter did he

¹ See note at the close of the chapter.

² See Appendix III.

look back with more gratification than to the gracious visit paid to him there in 1886 by her Majesty, then Princess of Wales, and their Royal Highnesses the Princesses Louise, Victoria and Maude. The inhabitants of the ancient and loyal city of Exeter, were in like manner deeply touched and gratified by their coming in such a way.

Some impressions of the home life at the Palace during those years have been contributed by one of the family.¹

“It is not easy to sketch, in a few words, the impression which my father’s life left upon his family during his fifteen years’ Bishopric. But as a Vicar he had taken, as a matter of course, the priority of parochial to private interests; and this repeated itself in the wider sphere. The Palace was to him a ‘trust’ to be used as a centre for hospitality, whether for gatherings of clergy and Church workers, or for our weekly ‘At Homes’ and occasional dinner-parties. He took much interest in keeping it up, and also in the garden, in which he planted another tree each year: and he often regretted that a scheme to restore its fragments of ancient cloister proved beyond his means.

“We did not often go with him in his visits about the Diocese, but from time to time prominent laymen stayed with us; and the fact was probably known to them that his life was one of work, unbroken except by his love of home, and by time reserved in his summer holiday for literary ventures.

“He was often away for Sunday work, but when at home he never missed reading us ‘The Christian Year’ and his own poems for the day ‘From

¹ Miss M. Bickersteth.

Year to Year : ' nor, whatever visitor might be present, did he fail to offer a prayer for the absent members of the family, and to claim the singing of favourite hymns before Cathedral Evensong.

" He was never a leader in Church politics at Bishops' Meetings or in Convocation ; but he had trained his mind in secular politics from boyhood by study of the *Times*, and on his return from London he would give us *résumés* of the trend of affairs, which were marked by his natural shrewdness. His deep love of the Church and her progress left him untrammelled, as outsiders have noted, by party considerations. He saw also where the Diocese would gain, by a share in the increased centralization and common action of modern Church life. He grasped that the Archbishop was " *Primus inter Pares*," but he responded to his lead with enthusiastic loyalty. He trusted us ever to regard his official interests, and trust was the essence of his nature.

" At home his will was law, and touched by the strictness of the early Evangelicals. His study was reserved for work, except when we met after evening Chapel, or when invaded by grandchildren ; and in the earlier days he would return thither for work, even after dinner.

" His musical perception was keen, while his knowledge of music was limited. He talked very little of spiritual matters, and left us free as to personal development, but the impression he gave us in daily life was one of sunny faith, won, as he would tell us, by doubts and struggles in early manhood, which he thought had left no part of the battle-field he did not know. He would never give us his judgment in a hurry, but say instead, ' I will pray it over and think it over,' though it might mean a delay of many days. His gentleness was self-evident, but it was the outcome of control

of a quick temper, and it was known in the household that his early rising did not mean extra work, but time reserved for devotion before the day's duties. His usual freedom in expressing affection, veiled a reserve as to the deep sorrows and perplexities of life, which he allowed few to penetrate. But he met them—*e.g.* the death of his son, the Bishop of South Tokyo—with a submission to the will of God we shall never forget. ‘If I can serve Christ in London,’ he said to me just before his resignation, ‘then I must not think of completing my sixteen years here;’ and the motto he had carved above his study mantelpiece, surrounded by pictures of Trinity College, Cambridge; Christ Church, Hampstead; Norwich, Gloucester and Exeter Cathedrals, was ‘*Cui servire regnare.*’”

Early in 1898, it was resolved that a testimonial be presented to the Bishop by the Diocese on his birthday in the following January, to commemorate the fifteenth year of his Episcopate and the fifty-first of his ministry in the Church. It took the form of a portrait of himself, which was presented at a large gathering of the clergy and laity in the Chapter House of the Cathedral at which Archdeacon Sandford presided.

The Rt. Hon. Sir John Kennaway, Bart., M.P., in making the presentation said :—

“ We meet under happy circumstances to-day, in this ‘Ever Faithful city,’ and within the precincts of our grand Cathedral. Exeter has not always been the abode of peace and happiness. History tells us of the sieges undergone, of the excitement of Royal visits; and, like other cities, Exeter has witnessed the growth of different

parties, civil and religious, in her midst, with rival powers, conflicting jurisdiction, claims of obnoxious privileges and the right of sanctuary, bringing about strained relations between the Guildhall and the Chapter, verging almost upon civil war. I take it that the presence of the Mayor to-day is a sign that these times are past, and that harmony, peace, and good fellowship now exist between the city and the Chapter.

"Exeter has on its roll of Bishops many familiar names of great men who have occupied this See, great and brilliant statesmen, administrators, commentators, and translators of the Bible, and master builders. I am not sure whether there are any warriors among them. Walter Bronescombe, Peter Quivil, Stapledon, Grandison, Trelawney, Buller, and Courtenay are men in the past, who have left great names behind them. Some of us can still remember, in our own times, the powerful and acute intellect of Henry Phillpotts, while the force, the energy, the fire, and the strength of Frederick Temple are sufficiently in our memories.

"You, my Lord, the son of a large-hearted and devoted father, who practically gave his life to the Church Missionary Society, came among us with a different training, with the experience of a large metropolitan parish, as a commentator of knowledge and research, a poet whose name is dear, and who has brought comfort to thousands on either side of the Atlantic. You have won our hearts by loving sympathy, by a generous and far-reaching hospitality, by an encouragement given to Church workers of all grades of the Diocese, by a desire to draw closer to us our Nonconformist brethren, by a recognition of the claims of our soldiers and sailors to Church work and Church sympathy, and also by the prominence you have given to the missionary cause in this Diocese, a cause which the

recent Lambeth Conference acknowledged to be the most important committed to the Church. It was felt that the fiftieth year of your ministry, and the fourteenth of your episcopate, should not be allowed to pass by without there being secured to us some memory of what you have been and what you are—a permanent abiding memorial.

“The times are changed in regard to the episcopal office. It used to be said that the Bishop could only come into his Cathedral city from a far-off palace in a coach and four. Now railways and the march of modern ideas have changed all that. But we do form very high ideas of the episcopal office, and we certainly make very great demands upon it. We expect the Bishop to take part in all the varied forms of our modern Church life, to be acquainted with every corner of his Diocese; we expect him to restrain, to stimulate, to encourage, and to counsel. Nor are these all. We are passing through, it may be, critical and perilous times, and duties and responsibilities rest upon the Bishops in regard to them. We do not desire in these times to invoke the assistance of law or Parliament. We look to you, my Lord, and to your brethren as our leaders. We would render to you obedience. We would give you an assurance of our hearty support in defending the rights of the Church, in maintaining her discipline and doctrine.

“We thank God for the age in which we live, for never has the Church done her duty so well, never has she been so firmly rooted in the affections of the English people. And we earnestly pray that now, in these our days, God will defend His Church, and, as we have received it from our forefathers, in its beauty and purity—Catholic, Apostolic, and Protestant—so we pray that we may be enabled to hand it down to those that

come after us, in a way that will show that we have been worthy of the great trust committed to us.

" My Lord, we now propose to present this picture to the Diocese, but there will be a replica of it for Mrs. Bickersteth. The work of preparing and organizing this presentation has been a work of love. The response that we had to the invitations sent out has been from beginning to end most gratifying. We earnestly hope that this picture will be treasured and valued by you and your family, and that it will remain among us as a stimulus to encourage us and all Church workers in the Diocese, to do and to attempt great things for God and His Church. I have pleasure in presenting you, my Lord, with this book containing a brief account of the steps which led up to the painting of this likeness, together with the book of subscribers."

The Bishop in returning thanks said :—

" Dear Archdeacon of Exeter, dear Sir John Kennaway, and all my brethren of the clergy and laity. A circular which was signed by thirty eminent laymen and forty eminent clergymen (almost all of our Diocese), fell into my hands last spring. They proposed to mark the completion of my then half-century of ministerial work by asking me to sit for my portrait, which when painted, should be hung in the Palace hall among those of my predecessors. Their far too generous testimony borne to my pastoral and episcopal labours, make my heart tremble and my cheek blush to think of my countless shortcomings in the irrevocable past, for when I read it I could only take shelter in the Psalmist's prayer, ' Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord ; for in Thy sight shall

no man living be justified.' And then I had always hitherto declined to have my portrait painted, for I felt time was priceless, and photographs would suffice. But I could not, I dared not, refuse the wish of so many friends, when it was pressed upon me by men whom I have revered and loved so long. So here I am before you to-day, my brothers and sisters in Christ, to thank you with a full heart for the portrait which you have so kindly combined to present to the See of Exeter, and not only so, itself the forerunner of a replica, which you have thoughtfully provided to give my family as an heirloom when I am no longer among them.

"It is, indeed, to me a most humbling thought the being enlinked to such an historic chain of Bishops of Exeter (myself the sixty-second Bishop) from Leofric, who was installed by King Edward the Confessor and Editha his wife, in the year 1050 ; a chain now stretching on and on through more than eight centuries of the Church's warfare and witness for the truth ; a chain which embraces such indefatigable builder Bishops—if I may so call them—as Warelwast, to whom we are indebted for the two Norman towers of our Cathedral, and to Marshall at the close of the twelfth century, and Bronescombe, Quivil, Stapledon, and the noble Grandison, and others toiling from 1258 to 1370 A.D. ; a chain also embracing the glorious Reformation era. And of these Bishops let me select Myles Coverdale, to whose translation of the Bible England owes much, and the saintly Joseph Hall from 1627 to 1641, and I must include (for it is a watchword in the West of England), Trelawney, who was one of the seven Bishops imprisoned in the year 1688, and who that same year was translated from Bristol and enthroned in our Cathedral. Time forbids my touching on other

names, save one still with us, who crowns our group, Archbishop Temple, but we may all pray to tread in their footprints so far as they trod in the steps of our Lord and Master.

"I received yesterday morning the kindest letter from Lord Clinton, who writes to me. 'To my very great regret, I am compelled to give up my engagement to present to you your portrait on behalf of the subscribers; but my London doctor positively orders complete rest.' God grant he may soon be restored to perfect health, for he is one of the pillars of England's Church in our Diocese. Lord Clinton goes on to speak of the difficulties and anxieties which beset us at the present time. But, as I have often said in public, there are, I believe, very few Churchmen in our happy Diocese who are not loyal to their Mother Church. Is it too presumptuous to say that the occasion on which we meet this afternoon is, in itself, one testimony among many others, that clergy and laity are closely knit together, and that both look upon their Bishop without any mistrust or suspicion? They surely must trust him as he trusts them, or why do they care to perpetuate any reminiscence of their Bishop by a costly portrait? Confiding leads to confidence; trust begets trustworthiness. As Keble says:—

'Sweet is the smile of home, the mutual look,
Where hearts are of each other sure.'

We feel at home one with another. If there are any wandering sheep or lambs, true shepherds seek till they find the wanderers, and bring them back to the fold, and feed them in green pastures and by the waters of quietness. And you know well that your Bishop, supported by his beloved Suffragan Bishop, and his trusted Archdeacons and Canons, and Rural - Deans, and Chaplains, and fellow-labourers, both lay and clerical, would never resort

to the Courts of Law unless absolutely duty-bound and conscience-bound, but would desire as your father in God, only to hold the pastoral staff, which is but another name and form and office of the shepherd's crook."

The portrait is a three-quarter length picture in oil colours, by Mr. A. Cope, the celebrated portrait painter. The Bishop is represented in his Convocation robes, and is sitting as many will recall him—with his head resting upon his hand. It is undoubtedly a faithful picture, the only point on which criticism has been offered being that the mouth is somewhat rigid. The Convocation robes have afforded the artist the opportunity of putting a considerable amount of colour into the portrait, and this he has managed extremely well.

NOTE.—This letter from his old friend the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Westcott), was written just after the Lambeth Conference, and on the eve of the death of Bishop Edward Bickersteth. It is pathetic as expressing hopes which were destined to be speedily disappointed :—

"Auckland Castle, Bishop Auckland, August 3, 1897:

"**MY DEAR BROTHER,**

"It is most kind of you to send me a memorial of the Conference. I possess the book already, with a more special inscription, and I can therefore send this copy to our elder missionary son, Arthur (at Madras), who is a great student of hymns, and will value it greatly.

"You can imagine how great a disappointment it was to me not to be able to meet the brethren face to face, but the doctor's orders were peremptory, and I could not but recognize that they were right. My breakdown was complete. However, I shall be able to leave home to-morrow, and I am assured that if I can take a complete rest (How can I?) till the end of September, I shall recover my usual strength.

"I was very sorry to hear what you tell me of your son Edward. Will you give him my affectionate remembrances? The winter will, I trust, fully restore him. I can imagine how you have suffered from the heat at Lambeth. You will, I hope, have a refreshing summer.

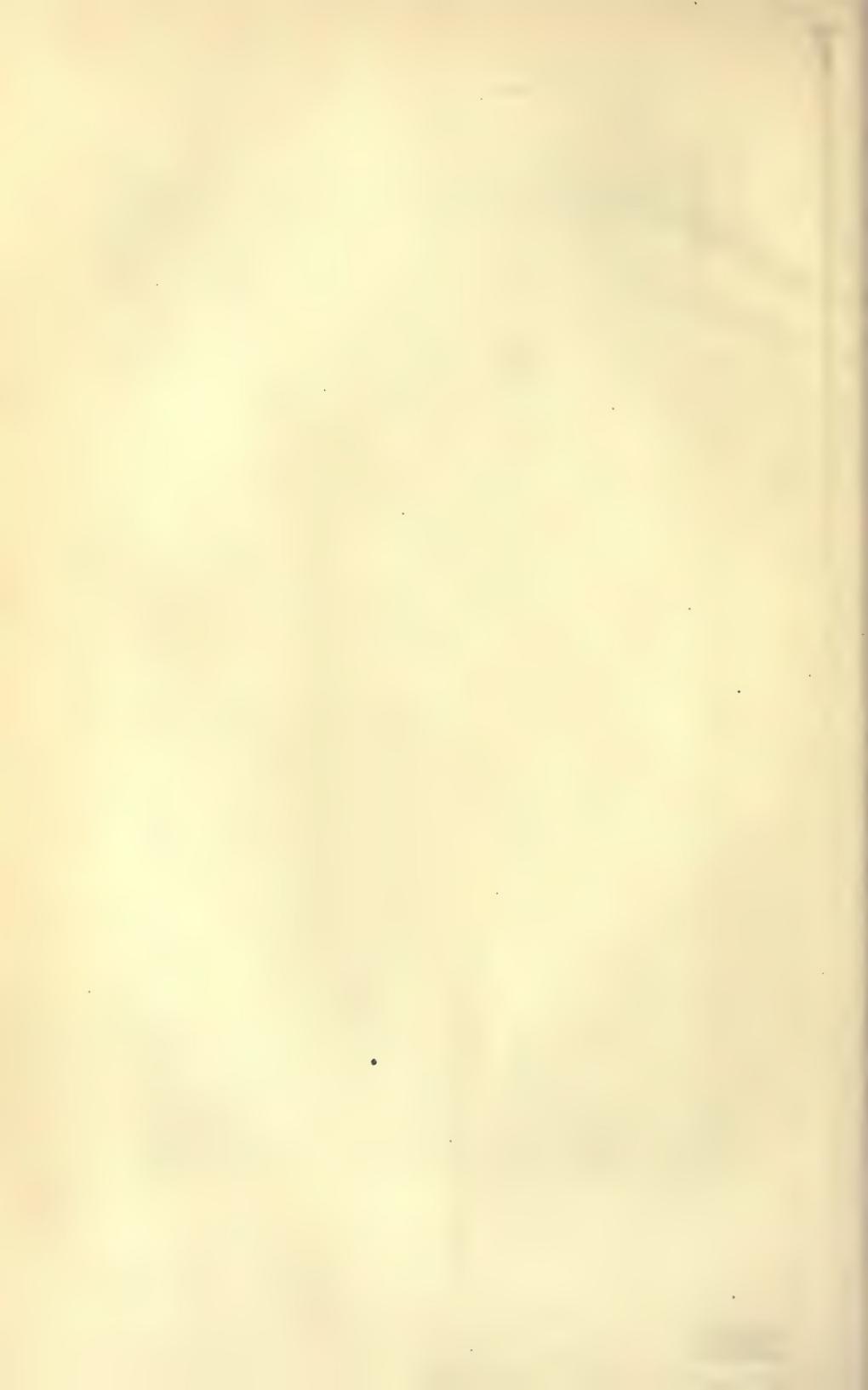
"Yours affectionately,

"B. F. DUNELM."



Photo : J. Valentine and Sons, Ltd.

EXETER CATHEDRAL AND PALACE—EAST VIEW.



CHAPTER VI

1848–1900

Literary work—"Yesterday, To-day and For Ever"—Analysis of the Poem—Its Reception—Other Verse—The Hymnal Companion—Its Characteristics—The Bishop on Hymnology—"From Year to Year"—"Peace, perfect Peace"—Commentary on the New Testament—The "Rock of Ages"—"The Spirit of Life"—"The Master's Home Call"—"The Shadowed Home"—"The Feast of Divine Love"—"Thoughts in Past Years."

"He touched his harp and nations heard entranced."

POLLOCK.

"Et fortassis inveniet pius pulsator quod temerarius scrutator non posset."—ST. BERNARD, "Sermons on Canticles," xxvi.¹

BISHOP BICKERSTETH's retirement from active work towards the close of the year 1900, will afford a convenient break for the purposes of a review of his literary and missionary labours, which will be given in this and the succeeding chapter.

His most famous writings were his poems, and the Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer which he compiled. Though the author of a large number of theological and devotional works, some of which had an immense circulation, to his contemporaries he was most widely known and admired as a religious poet. He was recognized as being one of the sweet singers of the

¹ The sense of these words may thus be paraphrased. "He who knocks reverently at the door will, perchance, find what the rash investigator must seek in vain." St. Bernard is speaking of the spirit in which the study of Holy Scripture should be undertaken.

Israel of God in his day, and whilst his poetry appealed most powerfully to the Protestant element in Anglo-Saxon Christendom, there were those in the Roman Catholic Church who were attracted by it, as will appear from the letter of John Henry Newman on the poem, "Yesterday, To-day and For Ever."

It is not easy to differentiate Bishop Bickersteth's verse. It has no single quality which may not be found in greater degree in the poetry of "The grand old Masters and the Bards sublime," though in many passages he approaches very nearly to them. Imagination and pathos, solemnity and sublimity, simplicity and strength, sweetness and tenderness, deftness and delicacy of touch, he has these elements of true poetic power in a very high degree. But there is something besides, which gives his poetry its chief characteristic. It is pervaded, as it were, by a luminous ether of spirituality and heavenly-mindedness, which he derived from a close walk with God.

The publication of "Yesterday, To-day and For Ever" in 1866, at once brought his name before a world-wide circle of readers. He thus describes the *motif* of the book in his prefatory note :—

"The design of the following poem has been laid up in my heart for more than twenty years. Other claims, however, prevented me from seriously undertaking the work until little more than two years ago. But then the deep conviction that those solemn events, to which the latter books of my poem relate, were already beginning to cast

their prophetic lights and shadows upon the world, constrained me to make the attempt. If it may please God to awaken any minds to deeper thoughts on things unseen and eternal by this humble effort to combine some of the pictorial teaching supplied by His most Holy Word, it will be the answer to many prayers."

The boldness of such an attempt was startling, whilst the sustained ease, the buoyancy and strength with which the author maintained his flight and soared aloft in regions of thought, hitherto visited but by few poets, were still more surprising. Not many have been found to venture upon a preserve which had come to be regarded as belonging exclusively to Dante and Milton.

The mind of the writer of "*Yesterday, To-day and For Ever*" had indeed been steeped in the writings of these immortal Christian poets; it had learned to fly, as it were, under their wing. But it is clear to his readers that Holy Scripture, read, studied, meditated upon, and interwoven into the very texture of his thought, was the great reservoir from which he drew his inspiration. Some of his critics have pointed out that in respect of the inwardness of his knowledge of the sacred writings, he more than rivalled his immortal precursors. However this may be, he came and went at will in realms which they had made their own. He was free of that celestial country, which he explored at will, and wherein he felt too much at home to confine himself to the tracks which they had opened before him.

The scope and range of the poem can only be

briefly indicated here. It will be necessary for such a purpose to quote at length a few passages, which would suffer from compression. These are difficult to select amidst a profusion which is bewildering and which reminds one of Sinbad in the valley of diamonds. The poem consists of twelve books, the subjects of which are as follows:—

- I. The Seer's Death and Descent into Hades.
- II. The Paradise of the Blessed Dead.
- III. The Prison of the Lost.
- IV. The Creation of Angels and Men.
- V. The Fall of Angels and of Men.
- VI. The Empire of Darkness.
- VII. Redemption.
- VIII. The Church Militant.
- IX. The Bridal of the Lamb.
- X. The Millenial Sabbath.
- XI. The Last Judgment.
- XII. The Many Mansions.

A short account of each Book will be given with references and occasional extracts.

The first Book tells of the Seer's own death and descent into Hades, an introduction to the great subject of the poem which was confessedly unique. The call to leave the world, the account of what he felt when it came, the farewells to his family and his last prayer for them, are very striking—

“ I whispered to my wife, ‘The time is short,
I hear the Spirit and the Bride say “ Come,”
And Jesus answering, “ I come quickly.” Listen !’
And as she wiped the death-dews from my brow,
She falter’d, ‘ He is very near,’ and I
Could only faintly say, ‘ Amen, amen,’
And then my power of utterance was gone :
I beckoned and was speechless : I was more
Than ankle deep in Jordan’s icy stream.
My children stood upon its utmost verge,

Gazing imploringly, persuasively,
 While the words, 'Dear, dear father,' now and then
 Would drop, like dew, from their unconscious lips,
 My gentle wife, with love stronger than death,
 Was leaning over those cold gliding waves,
 I heard them speaking, but could make no sign ;
 I saw them weeping, but could shed no tear ;
 I felt their touch upon my flickering pulse,
 Their breath upon my cheek, but I could give
 No answering pressure to the fond hands pressed
 In mine. So rapidly the river bed
 Shelved downward. I had passed or almost passed
 Beyond the interchange of loving signs
 Into the very world of love itself.
 The waters were about my knees ; they washed
 My loins ; and still they deepen'd. Unawares
 I saw, I listened—who is He who speaks ?—
 A Presence and a Voice. That Presence moved
 Beside me like a cloud of glory ; and
 That voice was like a silver trumpet saying,
 'Be of good comfort. It is I. Fear not !'
 And whether now the waters were less deep,
 Or I was borne upon invisible arms,
 I know not ; but methought my mortal robes
 Now only brushed the smoothly gliding stream,
 And like the edges of a sunset cloud
 The beatific land before me lay.
 One long last look behind me ; gradually
 The figures faded on the shore of time,
 And as the passing bell of midnight struck,
 One sob, one effort and my spirit was free."

(Book I. 364-405.)

A few lines further on, Oriel his guardian angel
 is thus introduced—

"Brother, thou art by my side,
 By me thy guardian angel, who have watch'd
 Thy footsteps from the wicket gate of life,
 And now am here to tend thy pathway home."

As the passage describing the Seer's departure
 from earth has been quoted, a few lines telling

of his welcome in Paradise should also be given—

“ Welcome to heaven, dear brother, welcome home !
 Welcome to thy inheritance of light !
 Welcome for ever to thy Master’s joy !
 Thy work is done, thy pilgrimage is past ;
 Thy guardian angel’s vigil is fulfill’d ;
 Thy parents wait thee in the bowers of bliss ;
 Thy infant babes have woven wreaths for thee ;
 Thy brethren who have entered into rest
 Long for thy coming ; and the angel choirs
 Are ready with their symphonies of praise.
 Nor shall thy voice be mute : a golden harp
 For thee is hanging on the trees of life ;
 And sweetly shall its chords for ever ring,
 Responsive to thy touch of ecstasy,
 With hallelujahs to thy Lord and ours.”

(Book I. 846-860).

In Book II. the Seer under the conduct of Oriel, descends into the lower world, and at length reaches Paradise, where the climax is reached in lines full of pathos, which describe the Seer’s meeting with his Divine Master, Christ the Lord.

“ And as I spake,” etc.—(II. 150-202).

Then he tells with great beauty of his greeting with “ those loved long since and lost awhile,” his children who had died in infancy, his parents, members of his flock, and others. And here he broaches the novel view that such as die as babes continue to be—

“ . . . babes of light
 In God’s great household.
 A babe in glory is a babe for ever.”

The thought is worked out in detail with much grace and ingenuity.

Book III. carries the Seer to the prison of the Lost, which is visible from the uttermost border of Paradise. The descriptions are powerful and vivid. Oriel tells of three visits which he had made as "the Guardian of lost Souls to that dual realm." One incident, that of Theodore, a youth in the days of Constantine the Great who had apostatized in order to win a heathen bride and had died impenitent, is narrated with great dramatic force and realism.

When Theodore asks Oriel to tell Irene of his doom and warn her to repent, and also to comfort his mother who may be searching for him in Paradise, the angel replies in accents of mingled sorrow and reproof (Book III. 685-698).

Book IV. treats of the creation of angels and men which Oriel recounts to his ward. It opens with an apostrophe to tears, which is a gem of beauty but too long to quote. The Seer had been overcome with grief at the scenes which he had witnessed in the prison house of the Lost. He says :—

" Yes, there are tears in heaven ; love ever breathes
Compassion ; and compassion without tears
Would lack its truest utterance : saints weep
And angels : there no bitterness
Troubles the crystal spring."

(Book IV. 65-69.)

Oriel accedes to his request that he might hear from his lips the story of Creation. He shows how God created angels and men with the awful prerogative of free will. The angels were warned that their trial would come (Book IV. 472-481, 493-496).

The Book concludes with the story of man's creation, his introduction into Paradise, and the charge given him to be steadfast in obedience.

In Book V. the catastrophe of the Fall is portrayed, and here is perhaps the most original of all the poet's conceptions. He holds that the fall of the angels and of man was all but contemporaneous. Man in his planet home was committed to the oversight of the loftiest of created spirits, "Lucifer, Son of the Morning." His attempts to seduce the angels from their allegiance are narrated with much vigour, and Oriel tells how he was deputed, with a band of angelic warriors, to guard mankind's first parents from all ghostly violence—

"Other temptations, warned, themselves must shun."

The Fall of Man is treated with much force and freshness. The serpent decoys Adam away from Eve, and so gains access to her for the accomplishment of his fell design. The rest of the story traverses ground which is familiar to the reader of Milton. Adam is represented as saying—

"Both cannot live, and therefore both must die,
So saying, from her hand he took and ate,
Not circumvented by the serpent's fraud
But blindly overcome by human love,
Love's semblance which belied its name, denying
The great Creator for the creature's sake."

(Book V. 525-530.)

Book VI. continues the thread of Oriel's story in which is described the progress of the Empire of Darkness. The plottings and machinations of Satan, his malice with the apparent success which attended it, during the weary ages between the

Fall and the First Advent, are depicted with an animation that bears the reader along with unflagging interest.

One, among many instances of the writer's unconventional treatment of well-worn subjects, is the Speech of Mammon, Milton's "least erected spirit of all that fell" in the synod of the Apostate Angels. The passage begins thus—

"I too have poised the heart of man, and watched
 With sleepless eye what avenue may best
 Yield us access. And here I answer, 'Gold.'
 Smile not that yellow dust should have such power;
 For what is Man but dust? What marvel then
 Dust over dust holds sway?"

(Book VI. 240-245.)

The next Book (VII.) begins the story of Redemption, which is ushered in by Gabriel appearing to Oriel, as he mused over the prophet's words, "Watchman, what of the night?" and saying to him—

" . . . Brother,
 The morning cometh, and the night: beyond
 All is unclouded everlasting day.
 This very hour the Sun of Righteousness
 Peers o'er the horizon, Virgin-born to-night
 Within the crowded gates of Bethlehem
 A Babe, who owns no human sire, is lying
 Upon His mother's bosom."

(Book VII. 64-71.)

The earthly life of the Incarnate Son is sketched in words from which the task of selection is difficult, but the devout reader will scan them with delight. A glorious climax is reached in the description of the Lord's Ascension into heaven, and His royal progress to the right hand of the Majesty on High (Book VII. 1008-1108).

In Book VIII. the author conceives that the conflicts of the Church on earth have had their counterpart in heaven, basing his view on Rev. xii. 7-12, and that this warfare takes place, not as with Milton before the creation of man, but after the Ascension of Christ. The fortresses of Satan are stormed by the celestial hosts, and the Devil and his angels are cast down to hell. A very fine description is that of the martyrdom of Perpetua (lines 218-250), and the author, unlike Milton, makes the holy angels liable to wounds, Oriel himself receiving a scar (*Ibid.* 490-503.)

The subject of Book IX. is the Bridal of the Lamb, which is ushered in by the trumpet of the Archangel, when the dead in Christ are raised. The spirits of the blest are gathered in one great multitude, clothed in their glorified bodies, whilst those who are alive and remain on the earth, are caught up to meet them in the air. The reception of the Bride is set forth in a passage of great beauty, ending with the words—

“Wife of the Lamb, known only by His name :

Oh finite image of the Infinite :

Oh holy creaturehood, perfect at last :

Oh true Self raised to true unselfishness,

Living for Him alone, who is thy life,

All and in all for Him, as He for God.”

(Book IX. 490-495.)

The increase of bliss to the redeemed, when clothed upon with their glorified bodies, is couched in striking couplets—

“These bodies of our glory could sustain

More of His glory than the naked spirit ;

Our pure affections His affections clasped ;

And every power within us had some hold

On His Omnipotence. Like imaged like,
 And, as with us, so was it with the rest :
 To all a vast promotion of their bliss,
 To each the increase, as each sowed on earth.
 Love only can know love. And as they loved
 They knew Him. As they knew Him, they returned
 His lineaments of beatific light :
 So glory is proportionate to grace.

(Book IX. 556-567).

In Book X. the author is on ground of all others the most debatable. He belonged to a school of thought in the Church which has had its representatives from very early times, and which holds that the first resurrection will usher in the visible reign of Christ upon the earth for a thousand years. Though perhaps the great number of those who read the poem will not see their way clear to a belief in the Premillenial Advent and Personal Reign of Christ on this earth, they cannot but follow the course of the poem with admiration and sympathy. The book begins with a beautiful description of the earthly Sabbath, the type and pledge of the Millenial. Some who have not present access to the poem may be glad to read it here—

“ A Sabbath morn—softly the village bells
 Ring out their welcome to the sacred day.
 The weary swain has drunk of longer sleep,
 And now, his children clustering round him, leads
 The happy group from under his low porch
 And through the little garden, where each plucks
 A rose or pansy, to the school they love :
 The busy hum delights his ear : and soon
 The morning hymn floats heavenward ; but himself,
 Holding the youngest Prattler in his arms,
 Waits in the churchyard, where about him lie
 His father, and his father’s fathers, till,
 The children following in their pastor’s steps
 Whose grey locks flutter in the summer breeze,

All pass beneath the hallowed roof, and all
 Kneeling, where generations past have knelt,
 Pour forth their common wants in common prayer.
 A rural Sabbath—nearest type of heaven ;
 Yet scarcely less beloved in toil-worn courts
 And alleys of the city. What true heart
 Loves not the Sabbath ? that dear pledge of home ;
 That trysting place of God and man ; that link
 Betwixt a near eternity and time ;
 That almost lonely rivulet, which flows
 From Eden through the world's wide waste of sand
 Unchecked, and though not unalloyed with earth
 Its healing water all impregn'd with life,
 The life of their first blessing, to pure lips
 The memory of a bygone Paradise,
 The earnest of a Paradise to come.
 Who know thee best, love best, thou pearl of days,
 And guard thee with most jealous care from morn
 Till dewy evening, when the ceaseless play
 Hour after hour of thy sweet influences
 Has turned the heart of pilgrims to the songs
 And music of their heavenly fatherland.
 But mortal ears are heavy, and mortal eyes
 Catch only glimpses dim and indistinct
 Of things unseen, beauteous but far away ;
 Enough to quicken, but not satiate love ;
 And the soon weary spirit exhausted sighs
 For wings to fly away, and be at rest,
 Or solaces its musings, there remains
 A Sabbath for the toiling Church of God."

(Book X. 1-44.)

The portraiture of the Messiah reigning in Jerusalem is also of surpassing beauty. It begins, "The voice of the Lord is on the waters" (Book X. 320-348).

In Book XI. the subject of the Last Judgment is set forth with much impressiveness. The evil angels are loosed, and there comes the final conflict, with the utter overthrow of the Powers of Darkness. Next, the fallen spirits and the souls of all mankind are brought to the Great White

Throne to hear their doom. The redeemed receive their crowns amidst the rejoicings of the heavenly company.

The lines which describe the sentence pronounced upon the arch-tempter (680-702) and the judgment of the lost, are most solemn and pathetic.

And finally, in Book XII., the author is upon ground hitherto all but untrodden, and where he exercises the whole array of his powers. His theme is the state of the earth after the final judgment, together with the Heavenly Zion and its many mansions, the coronation of the Bridegroom, the glories and pursuits of the blessed, and he treats it throughout with the utmost reverence, even where the flights of his imagination are boldest. The poem closes with a passage equal in tenderness and sublimity to any which have preceded it—

“ Such are the many kingdoms of God’s realm ;
And in these boundless provinces of light
We who once suffered with a suffering Lord
Reign with Him in His glory, unto each
According to his power and proven love
His rule assign’d. But Zion is our home ;
Jerusalem, the city of our God.
O happy home ! O happy children here !
O blissful mansions of our Father’s house !
O walks surpassing Eden for delight !
Here are the harvests reap’d once sown in tears :
Here is the rest by ministry enhanced :
Here is the banquet of the wine of heaven,
Riches of glory incorruptible,
Crowns, amaranthine crowns of victory,
The voice of harpers harping on their harps,
The anthems of the holy cherubim,
The crystal river of the Spirit’s joy,
The Bridal palace of the Prince of Peace,
The Holiest of Holies—God is here.”

The poem has had from the outset an immense circulation, upwards of 27,000 copies of it having been sold in England and more than 50,000 in America. It will have a distinct value for students of the religious life of its time because of the wide-spread influence which it has exerted, even if it should not find any considerable number of readers in the future. Vaticinations as to literary longevity are very precarious. The author continued to receive testimonies to the helpfulness of the book up to the close of his life. In 1872 he was permitted to know that selections from the poem had been read aloud by the Queen, then Princess of Wales, at the bedside of the King while he was recovering from the serious illness which had caused such wide-spread anxiety throughout the country.

As might be expected, there were many criticisms both adverse and favourable, but the one of most general interest will be found in a letter from John Henry Newman, with whom the author had been in correspondence, and to whom he had sent a copy of his book :—

“The Oratory, July 11, 1874.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I should have thanked you for the gift of your volume before this, had I not been away from this place, and without the opportunity of reading it.

“I will not say even now that I have read it through, for you may easily conceive that there are portions of it which are too distressing to me, and too sadly recall to my mind my own thoughts when I stood where you stand, to allow me calmly to dwell upon them ; but I gladly bear witness to

the imagination, the powers of language and easy eloquence, and the beautiful spirit which are characteristics of your poem as a whole ; and I can but bow before the great mystery, that those are divided here and look for the means of grace and glory in such different directions, who have so much in common in faith and hope.

“ I am, Dear Sir,

“ With much respect,

“ Most truly yours,

“ JOHN H. NEWMAN.”

The poetic taste of Bishop Bickersteth qualified him pre-eminently for work in the field of Hymnology. This he began in 1858 when he brought out a book entitled “ Psalms and Hymns based on the Christian Psalmody of the late Rev. Edward Bickersteth, Rector of Watton, Herts.” In 1870 he issued a new book “ The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer.” He writes—

“ If I might humbly take up, though with most unequal hands, the mantle which fell from my beloved father, and, aided by very many appliances not in existence forty years ago, but now at the service of every editor, if it might thus be permitted me in any way to advance a cause which he had so much at heart, and which is so intimately bound up with the spiritual life of the Church, I should esteem it one of the greatest mercies of my ministry.”

He brought out a third edition of the Hymnal Companion twenty years later, revised and enlarged, which is his final legacy in this respect to the Church. Within a few years,

like Aaron's Rod which swallowed up the rods of the Magicians in Egypt, it superseded the large number of private compilations which had been in use in the Evangelical parishes of England. Up to the present time it has kept the lead then taken. But in the year 1866, *Hymns Ancient and Modern* had been published, a book which appealed in a remarkable way to much of the Churchmanship of the day, and which had a tremendous vogue. Its music too was better than anything which had as yet appeared. The *Hymnal Companion* was therefore at a disadvantage; it found much of the ground covered which it might have occupied, had it been sooner in the field. But the Evangelical school in the Church adopted it almost without exception, and its circulation has been very large. It differs from *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in its larger proportion of subjective hymns, and also in its sacramental hymns which aim at a more moderate expression of Eucharistic doctrine.

The Editor of the *Hymnal Companion* to the Book of Common Prayer was happy in the choice of a title. It is literally a companion to the Prayer-book which it illustrates in verse and song.

“The order of the Ecclesiastical year is observed. It is not, indeed, thought well to assign to every hymn its position under a certain Sunday or holy day, which seems to hamper its free use on other occasions; but they are all ranged under those divisions of the Prayer-book with which their subjects most easily coalesce.”

On one occasion it greatly amused him to be taken to task for placing hymns in the list at the beginning of the book, under the heading "Annunciation of our Lady." He referred his critic to "the Lessons Proper for Holy Days" in the beginning of the Prayer-book. The introduction to the Annotated Edition of the Hymnal Companion deals with hymnology in a way which is both thorough and delightful. The late Lord Selborne, then Sir Roundell Palmer, himself a high authority upon the subject, eulogized it as a masterpiece of English writing. Here again the task of a compiler is difficult, because there is so much which he would fain include in his sketch. And it is a pity that such a treatise should be hidden away in a preface, where it can only be read by the few whose attention is specially directed to it. The Editor points out that the great variety of hymnals in the Church of England is both a sign of vitality and a source of weakness. He apologizes for adding yet another to the already confused and confusing multitude of hymnals, and pleads that his compilation may point the way to a solution of many acknowledged perplexities. He does not offer the simple result of his personal predilections, but a selection of hymns which have most widely commended themselves to the Church. There follows next a list of the hymnals collated, about twenty-three in all. Many hymns embodied in Nonconformist hymn-books show that, amidst so much which tends to separate and to widen the breaches in the walls of Zion, this harmony of song is no weak bond of union.

He speaks of the above hymnals as his “Friends in Council,” and of having again and again modified his own previous decision from the effect of their combined or preponderating judgment. In a great majority of the hymns, the harmony of doctrine, he adds, is most remarkable, as if Christians forgot their differences when singing their praises to God. But on the other hand, if the crucial test of Sacramental hymns be taken, one of the volumes he had mentioned contained many hymns on the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, the doctrine of which is hardly to be distinguished from that of Rome, while another did not allude to the Sacrament of Baptism.

Again, the Prayer-book has been the constant standard of reference in respect of the subject-matter of the hymns. And the Prayer-book ever appeals to the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith.

He then proceeds to give copious extracts from Lord Selborne’s “Essay on Church Hymnology” read at the York Congress in 1868. To quote these, however, would not come within the scope of this book, admirable as they are. The Editor pleads for emendations in hymns such as the line in the last verse of Toplady’s “Rock of Ages,” “When my eyestrings crack in death,” which he does not agree with Lord Selborne in preferring to the common version, “When my eyelids close in death.” And he mentions instances where variations such as—

“Hark the herald angels sing,”
from—

“Hark how all the welkin rings,”

have become so stereotyped in public favour, that a recurrence to the original would do violence to a thousand associations.

As to abridgment, he thinks that hymns of more than six verses should be sparingly admitted, but the greater rapidity with which hymns are now generally sung justifies larger selections.

The Bishop was severely criticized for some of his additions and emendations to hymns. It was all but universally felt that a fourth stanza to "Lead, Kindly Light" was uncalled for. He admitted as much by its removal to an Appendix in the last edition of the Hymnal Companion.

The verse had been a comfort to his daughter Alice at the time of her illness. He had sent a copy of it to Dr. Newman and also his little book the "Master's Home Call." In a very friendly correspondence with Dr. Newman the additional verse was discussed, and he did not gather that any objection was made to his use of it in the Hymnal Companion.¹

The lines run as follows—

" Meantime, along the narrow, rugged path,
Thyself has trod,
Lead, Saviour, lead me home in childlike faith,
Home to my God.
To rest for ever after earthly strife
In the calm light of everlasting life."

The Editor thinks it would be difficult to overestimate the strength of the bond of union which a Book of Common Praise would be in these anxious and perilous times: but it was not then

¹ See Appendix I.

in sight. He closes this introduction with the characteristic words :—

“ My constant prayer has been, in preparing this hymnal, that no hymn, no line, no word, might be found in it which should grieve the Blessed Spirit of love who abides in His Church and especially inhabits ‘the praises of His people.’ Whereinsoever I have failed, the good Lord pardon His servant in this thing.”

Lovers of hymnology will find much to interest them in the Bishop’s notes on various hymns in the annotated edition of the *Hymnal Companion*. He tells us, for instance, that James Montgomery wrote the well-known hymn, “ Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,” at the request of his father, the Rev. Edward Bickersteth, for his “ Treatise on Prayer.”

Allusion will be made later on to the Bishop’s own contributions to the hymns of the Church, in the account of his book, “ From Year to Year.” But there is one of them which requires separate mention, namely, “ Peace, perfect Peace,” a hymn which appeals to the hearts of Christian people in a way scarcely paralleled in our generation. It is loved and sung by persons of all ranks and conditions from the palace to the cottage. It was said to have been a favourite of Queen Victoria’s. The Bishop’s own account of its composition is, in substance, as follows: He was staying with his family at Harrogate in the summer of 1875. One Sunday morning at the Parish Church, the text of the sermon was from the words, “ Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace

whose mind is stayed on Thee." That afternoon he went for a solitary ramble on the moors, and when he joined his children at tea, he read them this hymn which he had made during his walk. Its popularity spread rapidly, and now no collection of hymns in any English Church or congregation would be considered complete without it. He delighted in the numerous testimonies which he received, as to the blessing and comfort which, by God's goodness, it had ministered to persons in various kinds of trouble. It has been translated into many languages, and the Bishop heard it sung in Japanese and in Chinese on his tour to the East.

"Peace, perfect Peace" was first sung to the tune in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* composed by A. H. Brown to the hymn, "Draw near and take the body of the Lord." But it is now oftenest set to the tune written for it by G. F. Coldbeck, a student of the Church Missionary College at Islington.

The Bishop published three volumes of his shorter poems. The first came out in 1849, and was dedicated to his father. It bears the title, "Poems by Edward Henry Bickersteth, Curate of Banningham, Norfolk," and includes the three Prize Poems which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement in the years 1844, 1845, 1846, besides efforts of his earlier years. They give promise of much of the excellence of his later work. His love of music comes out in some lines, "On the quick movement of Mozart's Symphony in E flat," and "On the slow movement of the same."

In 1871, a second volume, "The Two Brothers and other Poems," was published, which reached a second edition by the end of the year. The success of "Yesterday, To-day and For Ever" had evidently created a demand for other poems by its author. Those who love graceful verse, will find much to charm and soothe in this collection. They will feel that the writer was indeed one—

"Whose songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care ;
And come like the benediction,
That follows after prayer."

He was at home in Scripture subjects which he unfolded with a wealth of imagination, often illuminating and always reverent. The Bishop brought out a collection of his most characteristic hymns and shorter poems, finally revised and enlarged, in 1893, which he entitled "From Year to Year." It contains verses for every Sunday in the Church's year, as well as for the occasional services of the Prayer-book. It forms an anthology of his finest poems and hymns. He writes in his chaste and lucid English as follows :—

"It will not, I hope, seem presumptuous to string inferior pebbles on the same golden thread, upon which Heber and Keble and Monsell and Bishop Wordsworth have strung so many pearls of thought. But England's Church is waking more and more to the sense of the priceless legacy bequeathed her from the earliest ages in her Christian Year, as mapped out in her Prayer-book. The facts of our most holy faith stand out in bolder relief, as her children review them day by day, or week by week, in orderly succession. The

field is the world of Revelation. And if it may be granted the preacher or singer to present in clearer outline, by sermon or song, any one of the manifold truths, selected by the Church for our meditation on any Sunday or Holy Day, his labour will not be in vain."

The Bishop's best known hymns occur in the course of the Sundays of the year. His Missionary hymns fall naturally into the Epiphany Season together with the beautiful "Litany to the Eternal Father." "Peace, perfect Peace" comes after the Second Collect for Evening Prayer, and the Communion hymn, "Till He Come," after the opening words of the Epistle for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. On the First Sunday after Christmas there is the exquisite lyric, one of the finest in the whole collection—

"O God, the Rock of Ages,
Who evermore hast been,
What time the tempest rages,
Our dwelling place serene :
Before Thy first creations,
O Lord, the same as now,
To endless generations,
The everlasting, Thou.

Our years are like the shadows
On sunny hills that lie,
Or grasses in the meadows,
That blossom but to die ;
A sleep, a dream, a story
By strangers quickly told,
An unremaining glory
Of things that soon are old.

O Thou, who canst not slumber,
Whose light grows never pale,
Teach us aright to number
Our years before they fail.

On us Thy mercy lighten,
On us Thy goodness rest,
And let Thy Spirit brighten,
The hearts Thyself hast blest.

Lord, crown our faith's endeavour
With beauty and with grace,
Till, clothed in light for ever,
We see Thee face to face :
A joy no language measures ;
A fountain brimming o'er ;
An endless flow of pleasures ;
An ocean without shore."

Verses for the occasional offices of the Church, such as those for Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, Visitation of the Sick, the Communion of the Sick, the Burial of the Dead, Commination, For those at Sea, will be found very appropriate. Other favourite hymns by the Bishop are "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile," and "Pray, always Pray." He also brought out a Septette of Hymns for Missions in 1898. These are but specimens from a book, which is the despair of one who comes to it for purposes of quotation. Those who know it well, would be able to select many pieces of equal beauty. And to others it will prove no unworthy companion to the *Christian Year*. There can be no doubt that the aspiration, expressed in the preface to another of his books, will have had a manifold fulfilment; "May He who directs the windborne seed to the genial soil, only plant a few winged words in some hearts where they shall not be wholly unfruitful."

The earliest of the Bishop's prose writings was a small volume, "Water from the well spring for the Sabbath hours of Afflicted Believers, being a

complete course of morning and evening meditations for every Sunday in the Year," published in 1852. It was a selection from thoughts on passages of Scripture, addressed to his sister Frances during her long illness. It has been out of print for many years, but is of interest as showing the bent of his mind from the outset, and how studious he was in reading and learning the Scriptures.

His first formal treatise was a work addressed to the Unitarians of England, *The Rock of Ages*, in which he collected the testimonies of Holy Scripture to the Divinity of Christ and the Doctrine of the Trinity. It was not a heated polemic or a dry disquisition, but the expression of a deep conviction that many who refuse to acknowledge the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, have never duly examined one line of scriptural argument, which presented to his own mind the most conclusive evidence of this foundation truth. He adds, "I write from a most affectionate concern for their souls, and from a deep assurance that in the rejection or cordial acceptance of this truth are bound up the issues of eternal death."

His lot had been cast where many Unitarians resided. He praised their kindness and benevolence, their intellectual culture, their desire for the moral elevation of the poor. He had faced the very difficulties which prevented them from accepting the Church's creed, and overcome them by prayer and the written word. He had had many questions brought before him by Unitarians and others, but he had met and fought most of them himself. He says—

"I can conceive no purer joy on earth than that of being permitted to lead some other tempest-tossed spirit to that faith, where I have found security and peace. Those I address will at least find here no artificial fencing, for I am no trained swordsman in this controversy; but sometimes it has pleased God to overcome gigantic error, not by the skilful gladiator clad in the panoply of learning, but by a few smooth stones from the sling of a shepherd boy."

The author of the book had the happiness of knowing that it had brought light and peace to not a few who were in doubt and perplexity. It was widely circulated in England and America, besides being translated into German. He writes—

"The communications which have reached me on this subject, namely of help derived from the book, some of them sent to me from dying beds, and others from the bosom of home-life, may not be made public, but they lie deep in my heart among the choicest and most cherished memories of my ministry."

The book was used as a class-book not only in schools at home but also by many of the native catechists of India, and those engaged in missions to the Jews.

"The Rock of Ages" was followed ten years later by another book on similar lines, "The Spirit of Life." It was an expansion of one chapter in the previous work, which was designed to show that Scripture in the Old and New Testament alike, proves the co-equal Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It

met with a reception for which its predecessor had paved the way, and appealed to those who had been helped by it. His subject is the Personality, the Godhead, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost. A single extract from a chapter in which he deals with the sealing of the Spirit, will exhibit the freshness of treatment which makes a subject to live in the mind of its readers.

“The allusion to the seal as a pledge of purchase would be particularly intelligible to the Ephesians, for Ephesus was a maritime city, and an extensive trade in timber was carried on there by the ship-masters of the neighbouring ports. The method of purchase was this : the merchant, after selecting his timber, stamped it with his own signet, which was an acknowledged sign of ownership. He often did not carry off his possession at the time ; it was left in the harbour with other floats of timber ; but it was chosen, bought, and stamped ; and in due time the merchant sent a trusty agent with the signet, who, finding the timber which bore a corresponding impress, claimed and brought it away for the master’s use. Thus the Holy Spirit impresses on the soul now the image of Jesus Christ ; and this is the sure pledge of the everlasting inheritance.”

One of the most widely known of the Bishop’s prose writings was “The Master’s Home Call, Brief Memorials of Alice Frances Bickersteth, by her Father,” published in 1872. It consists of a sermon preached in Christ Church, Hampstead, after her death, on September 29, 1872, with a postscript giving the simple story of her life, illness, and death. The sermon concludes with some lines

of her own written the year before, on the death of a friend who had been a great sufferer—

“ And now her gentle ministries are o'er :
 The message came for her, and fearlessly
 She answered to its summons, ‘ Here am I.’
 She was ‘ so happy,’ for the Lord she loved
 Had heard her prayer and granted her request,
 And ‘ gently, gently led her home.’
 Safe, safe for ever now, no weary days
 Or sleepless nights of pain, no night is there.
 Another radiant form in white array'd,
 Another brow to wear the victor's crown,
 Another hand to strike the golden harp,
 Another voice to raise the triumph song.
 We may not weep for her, we can but join
 The angels' song of praise, ‘ Safe home, safe home.’ ”

The following are some verses of which the writer says, “ as we sate by her side and watched sufferings I was so powerless to relieve, I wrote them and placed them in her hand—

“ My lamb, thy path is thorny,
 And ruggedest at last !
 The close of thy short journey,
 With storms is overcast :
 But thy Shepherd's arms enfold Thee
 His arms of love and power,
 And He will ever hold thee
 From weary hour to hour.

My pretty one, my blossom,
 More loved than words can say,
 Upon thy parent's bosom,
 Thou could'st but fade away :
 So weeping we resign thee,
 And lay our treasure down,
 For Jesus would entwine thee
 In His unfading crown.

My own bright jewel, dearest,
 The graver's tool is keen,
 And sharpest seems when nearest
 The emerald's perfect sheen ;

But in the Prince's casket,
All mark its peerless glow,
And none will ever ask it,
'Why didst thou suffer so?'

But yet to see thee suffer
Seems harder evermore ;
And the last few waves are rougher
Than all that broke before :
And still the gusts more thickly,
Drive on the blinding foam :
Come quickly, Lord, come quickly,
And take our darling home."

About twenty-seven thousand of "The Master's Home Call" were printed, and amongst those deeply affected by it was Mr. Gladstone, who sent copies of it to many of his friends.

Two years later came "The Reef and other Parables," a book for young people, which did not, however, meet with the response which had been given to other works of the author. The parables are too elaborate for children, though teachers will find much that is useful in them. Two characteristic passages may be quoted. The first is from "Eugene the Debtor"—

"Salvation comes straight from the heart of God to the heart of man. Man has only to receive it; I say only to receive it: but where he has received it, then like Eugene, his life and not his lips alone, will prove his love."

The other is from Avedah ("that which is lost")—

"How I wish it was a visible conflict with evil," said the boy. "There would be something so heart-stirring in actually seeing the enemy and grasping the wonderful armour and dealing blows."

‘It is none the less real, my boy,’ replied Oberlin, ‘for being invisible. Perhaps if you had one *sight* of the hosts of darkness it would be too much for you to bear. Be sure the Captain of our salvation has done wisely in veiling the unseen world till His time is come.’”

Another book, “Hades and Heaven,” discusses the revelation which Scripture gives of the estate and employment of the blessed dead and the risen saints. Much of the ground covered in it has also been traversed in a later work, “The Shadowed Home and the Light Beyond.” It came out in 1875, and consists of meditations on “The Order for the Burial of the Dead” in the Book of Common Prayer. To quote the author’s words—

“It is designed for perusal in those sacred days which intervene between the death and burial of those we love. The closed shutters, or the drawn blinds, tell of this world being veiled from view for a season. And it is then, while the beloved tabernacle still lies in the silent chamber as in a domestic sanctuary, that the thoughts of the bereaved mourners instinctively turn to things unseen and eternal. Now the burial office of our Prayer-book has gathered together the ample testimony of Scripture regarding the holy dead, and presented it for our spirits in the most admirable sequence of thought.”

Such a book cannot fail to enable those who mourn to take a more intelligent part in the most touching of all the offices of the Church.

The book is one to be read rather than quoted, and yet a paragraph or two may be given from this treasury of comfort for the bereaved. Here is a

passage from the meditation on “The Threelfold Miserere”—

“It seems as if the cry of the publican, standing afar off in the temple, deeming himself unworthy to lift up his eyes to heaven, but smiting on his breast and saying, ‘*God be merciful to me a sinner,*’ were never long absent from the minds of the compilers of our liturgy. This *threefold miserere* is interwoven with the order for Morning and Evening Prayer, with the Litany, with the Office for Holy Matrimony, and The Thanksgiving after Childbirth, with the service for the first day of Lent, and with that for the Visitation of the Sick: and its spirit interpenetrates all the other offices of the Prayer Book. But never does it awaken a deeper response in the heart than when we are standing by the yet unclosed grave of one whom we shall not see again in the flesh, until ‘the day of the manifestation of the sons of God.’”

Just before this meditation there come the beautiful and most touching verses, “Hush, blessed are the dead,” to which reference has been made in “From Year to Year.”

The book upon which Bishop Bickersteth expended most thought and study was his “Practical and Expository Commentary on the New Testament,” which was begun in 1860 and completed four years later. His guiding principle is expressed in the title page by some words from the writings of the late Rev. W. Tait—

“The words of God are to theology what the facts are to science: they may not be set aside by reasoning whether we can harmonize them or not, they claim the obedience of faith.”

The object of the commentary, it was stated, was "to provide such brief remarks from Holy Scripture as the educated classes of the day might read to their families at morning or evening worship, 'that golden girdle of family life.'"

He sought to embody the results of some of the best English criticism then at his disposal. The notes will show that he had read widely, and thought out carefully and patiently the views which he sets forth. He felt that the responsibility of quoting or condensing the conclusions of other interpreters was scarcely inferior to expressing his own. He was often "tempted to argue at length against views from which he heartily dissented," but he bore in mind the difference between a reviewer and a commentator, a course which "preserved him from turning aside from the green pastures and still waters of Holy Writ, to wander on the bleak and barren mountains of controversy."

Such a work lay in the direction towards which he delighted "to draw his cares and studies," and he had the great satisfaction of knowing that the Commentary had met a real want, more than forty thousand copies having been sold. It was a bulky folio, and not easy withal to handle, yet it served its generation well, though now but little known. One or two short extracts will account for the large amount of favour with which it met. On St. Matt. xii. 1-8, he says—

"It is often urged that Christ released us from a strict observance of this day, *i.e.*, the Sabbath. If we consider the instances He allowed, we shall find that He delivered us from ritual

bondage, and from the superstitions with which man had overlaid God's ordinances, and nothing more. He sanctioned : (1) Works of necessity, as here the plucking of the ears of corn, or leading an ox or ass to the watering (Luke xiii. 15. (2) Works of mercy, as here lifting the sheep from the pit into which it had fallen ; such as ministering to the sick, for on this day he healed the man with the withered hand, the woman who was bowed together, the man who had the dropsy, and another who was blind. (3) Works of piety, as here he adduces the example of the priests who, in the temple, profane the Sabbath and are blameless ; and he allowed circumcision on the Sabbath, that the law of Moses might not be broken. But are these the relaxations sought in the present day by those who impugn the sanctity of the Sabbath ? Who would hinder the servants of Christ from such a like participation of food in their ministries of love ? Who would refuse the dumb pleadings of a suffering or starving animal ? Who would turn a deaf ear to the misery of his fellow-creature and deny the aid of medicine and skill ? Who would charge God's ministers with impiety for performing the duties of the Sanctuary, and administering the Sacraments of His love ? How unlike are these things to the frivolous dissipation, the merely secular instruction, the pleasurable excursion, the unhallowed buying and selling which men legalize and defend ! It is, indeed, surface study of this and other passages, which imagines that Scripture tends to, and countenances, the desecration of God's day."

Again in St. John xiv. 23—

"We will come"—We, my Father and I, one God. This, then, in its first meaning, was a spiritual Advent, the drawing near of God

to the soul, the indwelling of God in the hearts of His people. With such language the Old Testament had made them familiar. "Come and save us;" "O, when wilt Thou come unto me?" (Ps. lxxx. 2; ci. 3; Ex. xxix. 45). This assurance seems to have calmed and tranquilized every one there. Love would discern the Beloved, while disobedience, sure proof of the absence of love (ver. 24) would be blind to this spiritual presence of the Father and the Son, and deaf to the voice of Him who only expressed the will of His Heavenly Father."¹

At Hampstead he had brought out a small Manual, founded upon his father's "Treatise on the Lord's Supper," and which was entitled, "The Lord's Table." This he revised and published in 1896 under the title, "The Feast of Divine Love." It is just what those who are familiar with the writings of the Bishop would expect—simple, earnest, thoughtful, abounding in passages of great tenderness and beauty; a book exceedingly helpful to those who would "draw near with faith and take this Holy Sacrament to their comfort."

He also published the charges delivered in the course of his Visitations, selections from which are contained in a small volume entitled "Some Words of Counsel."²

After his retirement in 1900, the Bishop edited a volume of eighteen sermons, "Thoughts in Past Years," five of which were delivered when he was Vicar of Christ Church, Hampstead, and the

¹ For an account of a new edition of the Commentary upon which the Bishop worked for some years, see Appendix II.

² See Appendix IV.

remainder during the period of his episcopate. Attention may be called to several of them which were preached upon noteworthy themes and occasions.

In 1876 he was asked to deliver one of a series of lectures in St. James', Piccadilly, on "*Companions to the Devout Life*," the subject assigned to him being Milton's "*Paradise Lost*." He had studied Milton from his boyhood, and could repeat long passages of it in early days. Those who love Milton will find it excellent reading. He says—

"Pictorial teaching has a vast though undefined, and often unsuspected power; and with most of us, perhaps, who are here present to-day, the pictures of Milton's great Epic are like stained glass windows in the oratory of the soul, many of them very beautiful, and after Heaven's own design, but some of them, I venture to think, not altogether in harmony with the Scriptures of truth."

The features of "*Paradise Lost*" most helpful to the devotional life, are its pictures of Eden before the fall: its delineation of human love: its sketches of the ministry of angels. The unfolding of these must be taken as a whole, for excerpts would but mar the symmetry and beauty of the thought. Again he says—

"It has been almost universally felt that Satan is the hero of '*Paradise Lost*', and that despite ourselves, our interest gathers round the fallen Lucifer, who in his illimitable pride is fighting against illimitable power. Perhaps the greatest effort of poetry in the whole volume, I had nearly said in the English language, is

Satan's soliloquy in the opening of the Fourth Book, when after forcing his way out of Tartarus and treading the confines of Eden, he argues the reason of his fall."

The peril of this, as the author points out, is obvious—

"For, when condign punishment has straight-way followed insurrection against such hopeless odds, when created might is wrestling with Omnipotence, and created wisdom with Omnicience, it is difficult not to admire that unbending, indomitable will."

There is a very eloquent passage on page 80—

"Two great epics enriched the blood of the world in the seventeenth century. 'Paradise Lost' and 'Pilgrim's Progress' were given almost simultaneously to the Church of God. Each of them has done its work, and been inwrought into the very texture of the English mind. How often has some pictured story from 'Milton's Eden' or 'Bunyan's Pilgrimage,' come, like a breeze from the everlasting hills, to those who confess that they are strangers here, and that their citizen life is in heaven!"

The sermon on "Not by Might" delivered at his enthronement in Exeter Cathedral, has already been mentioned. Allusion will be made later to that on "the Gospel of God's Glory," preached at the Anniversary of the Church Missionary Society in St. Bride's, Fleet Street, in April, 1888. Two others, on "Christianity among the Jews" and "Oneness in Christ," give utterance to his views

upon subjects which he had greatly at heart, the latter having been preached at the Jubilee of the Evangelical Alliance on June 28, 1896. One more may also be specially noted on "The Choice of Moses," which he preached before the University of Cambridge on January 22, 1888. He closed with a moving appeal to his auditors, to consider the call to serve in the Mission Field—

"As the Bishop of a great Diocese, I know well the wants of towns and villages at home: but I am sure it is true of Churches as of men, 'there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to penury.' The Church which rises to the Master's call, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,' is the Church, which will be the most blessed at home, and I would venture earnestly to ask those who are looking forward to the ministry of souls, to weigh the competing claims of home and foreign work, and to ask themselves whether God is not calling them to forsake parents and brethren and country for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. The sacrifice is great, the reward is inexpressibly greater."

CHAPTER VII

1848-1906

Missionary enthusiasm—Visits to India and Palestine, 1880—To Japan, 1891—Extracts from letters and diaries—Mr. Eugene Stock's notes on the Bishop's connection with the Church Missionary Society.

"For My sake and the Gospel's."

ST. MARK x. 29.

ANY account of Bishop Bickersteth which did not bring out into strong relief the Missionary side of his career, would be very incomplete. The Lord's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," must have been perpetually in his thoughts. Missionary interest was like a thread, shot through the web of his life, which coloured it with its own distinctive hue.

His well-known Missionary hymn, "O Brothers, lift your voices," written for the Jubilee of the Church Missionary Society when he was a deacon, struck a chord which vibrated throughout the years that elapsed until the centenary of the Society was celebrated by him as Bishop of Exeter in 1898.

It was also true of him that "his zeal provoked very many": it was infectious, and it gave extraordinary success, under God, to his advocacy of the Missionary cause. He prayed, he pleaded, he

laboured incessantly, "in season and out of season, through good report and evil report." He was ever hopeful, sanguine, resourceful. Much of the spirit of the great missionary apostle St. Paul, on the day of whose conversion he was born, rested upon him. The memory of his enthusiasm will serve as an inspiration to encourage those who are cast down, and to shame those who are tempted to waver.

As instances of his devotion to the Missionary cause, it should be mentioned that he made each one of his large family in childhood a member of the Church Missionary Society ; that he carried out a system of house-to-house collections for missions in his parish at Hampstead, and that year by year he took his men's Bible-class in vans to the meeting of the Church Missionary Society in Exeter Hall.

This chapter will describe the Bishop's Missionary travels in India, Palestine and Japan. It will also contain the lucid and eloquent account of his relations with the Church Missionary Society, which Mr. Eugene Stock, his staunch and greatly valued friend, has very kindly contributed.

It was on the 25th of October, 1880, that he sailed for Bombay with his wife and eldest daughter, in the *City of Baltimore*.

His diary and letters give graphic descriptions of the voyage. He was permitted to hold a daily service at 10.30, besides the Sunday services, with celebrations of the Holy Communion and addresses. There are striking descriptions of nature and scenery, such as he records on Friday, October 29 :

"It was the most exquisite sunset, strange shell-like clouds which blushed celestial rosy red." But it is only the Missionary side of his journey that can be recorded in this chapter. A single extract of interest, however, may be allowed, which describes a Sunday in the Red Sea—

"November 7, 1880.

"We steamed out of sight of Suez and were in view of the Wells of Moses, the traditional and perhaps the most likely site of the passage of the Red Sea. We had service on deck at 10.30, when we read Exodus xv. as a special first lesson, within view of probably the very cliffs which had heard the Song at first."

He writes from Bombay on Friday, November 19—

"At 8, Edward, accompanied by Mr. Squires, who had both been looking about the harbour in search of our steamer, came on board. Oh, the inexpressible delight of our eyes resting on his dear face! He looked worn and thin, but has had fever during the last week, and Mr. Robert Clark, who is here, thinks that two months' travel with us will be the best tonic. Words cannot describe the hospitality of Mr. Squires: he had us all."

Of the Sunday in Bombay he writes—

"In the afternoon I addressed some eighty of the English-speaking residents and others, held in a Major Oldham's house, and in the evening preached to a very full Church on, 'Love is strong as death.' Many of our ship's passengers came, and the Captain. On Monday morning we went and saw the 'Robert Money School' of 250 pupils,

and I addressed some sixty of them on ‘Christian Ambition.’ We then went to the Scotch Presbyterian College, where Edward wanted to see their plans. It is a most active, energetic work which is being carried on there.”

On the following day he visited a wealthy and learned Hindu, to whom Sir M. Monier-Williams, K.C.I.E.,¹ had given him a letter of introduction.

“I told our friend’s son how, as a Christian, I longed for the time when we should all worship in one Christian Church; but that I was sure it was good for us to get to know one another, as we should respect each other more. Poor young man! he is a widower with two lovely little children, one three and a half years old, who so took to me, and one six months. I gave him a copy of my poem, which he graciously accepted.”

“November 25.

“We drove five and a half miles to the Christian Station at Nasik, a village one and a half miles off the town, a large town of nearly 30,000 people on the banks of the Godavery. We had the kindest welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, who sent their servant to meet us at the station. He took Edward and me all over the Mission Farm, which is entirely worked by the Christians of the village. It costs the Society nothing, as it more than pays its way, and it affords work for the converts and inquirers.”

After describing their methods of cultivation, he adds :

“By watering and working they have made a most fruitful out of a barren ground, which thing

¹ Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford.

is a parable. We then saw the Christian girls, thirty in number—Rosie's little Christina from Khairwarra among them, a fat, chubby child—make and have their breakfast, a flat millet cake and curry soup; very happy but very quiet. Altogether this is a delightful mission station, and seems a centre of labour for which we cannot be sufficiently thankful. We are here 1900 feet above the sea level, and with a west wind they get the benefit of sea breezes, though the sea is sixty miles distant."

His next letter was from Cawnpore—Dec. 1, 1880. They had stayed three days at Jubbalpur, part of which they spent at the Church of England Zenana Mission, with Miss Brand and Miss Evans. They drove eleven miles to see the famous marble rocks—

"which are wonderfully grand. The river Narbudda rushes through precipitous cliffs of marble; the white is the loveliest, though some is blue (they call it 'heavenly') and some yellow marble. They say the river bed is, in places, 200 feet deep. On the first Sunday in Advent Edward preached in Hindustani. He spoke with the greatest facility, and the people hung on his words. In the evening we attended the English service, conducted by the chaplain; good congregation, hearty singing, quaint, clever High Church sermon from a stranger, who looked up to the ceiling all the time he spoke."

They travelled *via* Allahabad, where they changed carriages, and were met at Cawnpore by "kind Mr. Stone, the chaplain, Montie's friend at Aijmere, who loaded us with kindness. The

interest of Cawnpore as the site of the Massacre is almost overpowering. We have been to the Memorial Church and saw the monument raised over the well. They are most impressive, and every few yards is sacred with heroic memories."

On Dec. 7 from Agra—

"We had a most enjoyable time at Lucknow, where we spent four days. Nothing could exceed the loving welcome which George and Harriet Durrant gave us. On Thursday we saw all over the ruined Presidency, which was held with such Spartan courage by our soldiers in the Mutiny. We saw the room where Sir Henry Lawrence was struck by the shell, the house where he died, and the grave where he was buried by night in silence in the graveyard, lest any voices should attract the enemy's fire. The tombstone bears these words, at his own dying request—

Here lies
HENRY LAWRENCE,
who tried to do his duty.
May the Lord have mercy on his soul!
Born 20th June, 1806. Died 4th July, 1857.

I read Dr. Gubbin's account of the Mutiny all day, being seedy. On Friday, in the afternoon, we rode on an elephant, which the Colonel kindly sent us, into the town, and to the old fort where the powder magazine was blown up during the siege. On Saturday we saw the vigorous Boys' School of 300 boys, the busiest hive of industry, under its Christian head-master, Mr. Sietal, such an intelligent man; the second master was baptized last Christmas. It would be indeed cruel to give up a work like this. On Sunday, Edward preached to some 1300 men and officers in the Cantonment Church. George preached in Urdu in the Mission

Church in the morning, and I in English in the evening, and on Monday morning we started quite early after the most enjoyable visit. We feel our hearts quite knit to those dear single-hearted labourers for Christ, who are left to hold the fort till more prosperous days enable us at Salisbury Square to send them reinforcements."

"We reached Agra at 11 at night. Here we have been simply entranced by the Taj—its serene simplicity and purity of taste, and at the same time its majesty of outline, make you feel you can never tire of looking at it.

"On Thursday we went again and stayed there till the evening light bathed the peerless marble in rose and ruby."

"Ajmere, December 13, 1880.

"Thank God, Edward is wonderfully better, and felt himself strong enough to attempt the long, slow journey, twenty-one hours for 232 miles. We threaded our way among the Rajpootana hills, rising abruptly from the plains to which our railway religiously kept. R. and M. met us in one of the Maharajah's carriages (he has always two at his command) to their palace home. It is far handsomer than I expected. The young king and one of his nobles were present at dinner, though of course taking nothing, which would have broken their caste. I had no conception that Ajmere would be so beautiful : it is far the loveliest place we have yet seen in India.

"On the evening of the 16th there was a total eclipse of the moon for nearly two hours. I never saw one so distinctly as in those crystal skies. But it was so strange and sad to see the nervous alarm of the Maharajah. The Hindus say a dragon is devouring the moon (hence its red colour), and they appoint a fast; the young prince's astrologer played

upon the boy's fears, and kept repeating 'Ram, Ram,' for hours. After dinner we drew the Maharajah into the drawing-room, and explained to him what caused the eclipse with the lamp, and an orange casting its shadow on our hand. And I think by degrees his fears subsided, but he was restless and disquieted. The next morning when I met him on the tennis-ground, I said, 'Well, Maharajah, the moon is none the worse for her eclipse (for she was shining over our heads on one side and the sun on the other), nor the sun, are they? He laughed, the danger being over. How I long that the boy may find Christ: a fine open-hearted fellow. It seems very hard not to be allowed to point him to the Star of Bethlehem.'

Captain Rundall, his son-in-law, was tutor to the Maharajah.

"We reached Delhi at nine, and there, at the station, were Allnutt and Lefroy, Mr. and Mrs. Winter, and Mr. Maitland, all waiting for us. Allnutt and I walked, the rest drove, passing through the ramparts which our brave troops stormed in 1857. This is a most pleasant bungalow on rising ground, with plenty of trees round it. It seems to me in many ways admirably suited for their little community, their monastery, as they sometimes gaily call it, though anything more unlike a monastery their happy life here could not be. They are bright and cheerful, and fond as brothers of each other. Mr. Lefroy¹ is the housekeeper just now, and does it admirably. And then, their missionary work is so real and absorbing, they give their whole heart to it. On Sunday morning I heard Edward preach another sermon, and came with them to the Holy Communion. There were

¹ Now Bishop of Lahore.

nearly two hundred in church, but only a few communicants (some twenty or twenty-four), as they are probably reserving themselves for Christmas Day. The joy of the circle was shadowed by Mr. Blackett's illness ; he has had fever on him, and the doctor has condemned him to go home immediately. They hope he may return after two years, but Murray's and his health failing is a heavy drain on their party of six.

"On Monday we went over the fort, which was the palace of the old kings of Delhi, and the centre of the great Mogul Empire. The marble hall of audience, richly gilded and inlaid, with its zenana palace on one side, and its magnificent baths on the other, scented with countless roses, was magnificent. And then we went on to the Jumah Musjid, the largest Mahomedan Mosque in India, and Edward and I climbed the minaret, from which we had a wonderful view of this great thriving city. That night I went out with them to their bazaar preaching, such a unique scene, nearly a hundred clustering round the two catechists who spoke, Allnutt, Edward and I standing behind them, eager faces looking up into ours."

The arrival of his children from Ajmere at Delhi for Christmas added greatly to the joy of the festival. He writes on December 26—

"While I was preaching yesterday at St. James' (the English church), the Brothers were all at St. Stephen's, where they had 170 communicants. This morning I have been preaching by interpretation there. I stood on the chancel step, and Tarachand, the native pastor, stood by my side and interpreted my address, sentence by sentence. I took as my text, 'So great salvation,' Heb. ii. 3, alluding to

Christmas and the last Sunday in the year, also to St. Stephen, whose name their church bears."

He mentions speaking at a service held at a station which was supported by one of the members of his congregation at Hampstead—

"The Christ Church student Botak was too far off to visit. You would, indeed, thank God for the vigorous missionary life pervading every part of this station, and the Cambridge men are so happy in each other."

The travellers, including the Rev. E. Bickersteth (his son), left Delhi for Lahore on December 27, as the next letter says, "with hearts full of gratitude and love," passing through Meerut, with its immense military cantonment, where the Mutiny first broke out.

Early in the morning they left the train at Umritsur, except Edward Bickersteth, who went on, and spent the day with Mr. Bateman and the Rev. R. Clark. Mr. Bickersteth addressed the members of the native Church Council, which was in session. Many of them were of high position, for he writes—

"At Umritsur the Gospel has conquered men of rank. It was the most striking result of Christian missions I have yet seen. Afterwards we drove to the golden temple of the Sikhs; their worship is a mixture of Hinduism and Islamism, no idol in the temple, but a great book, covered with a cloth, before which they make offerings of flowers, fruit, and money. Some rude music was kept up all the time. We had to take off our shoes and

wear slippers before we crossed the marble bridge leading to the temple, which is built in the midst of a great tank. We also saw the large mission schoolroom for boys (200), two orphanages for boys and girls, the Alexandra School, a noble institution for Christian girls of high caste. Most of them were away for their Christmas holidays, except some eight or nine of them, such bright intelligent girls. I spoke to them of the inscription on the Lollard's tower, Lambeth, 'Jesus amor meus.' We also called on the zenana ladies. It was so pleasant to find Miss Smith (of Hampstead Hill Gardens) so earnest and happy in the work. If you see her mother, do tell her how well and bright her daughter looks. The whole mission is full of life."

Of their visit at Lahore, he says—

"The kind Bishop met us at the station, and drove us and Archdeacon Matthew¹ (the most fascinating of men) to Bishopstowe in his carriage. The next morning, December 29, the Synod began with early service, Holy Communion and part of the Bishop's charge in the pro-Cathedral. At eleven o'clock we met, some fifty of us, in a large tent opposite the palace door. The Bishop's opening address was quite apostolic. I then read my paper on the 'Christian Ambassador,' and the Bishop insists on printing it with his charge. My second paper was delayed till the evening in the Lawrence Hall; it was on the love of Christ, and the love of His appearing. The subjects of the Synod were varied; all was full of interest, though our dear Bishop, the best of men, is not the best of chairmen. But his goodness and profound learning overcame everything. On Saturday, at night, Mr. Shirreff and Mr. Weitbrecht invited some sixty of

¹ Afterwards Bishop of Lahore.

the native converts. The Bishop sat among them as if they were his children, and would have me speak to them while they ate sweetmeats.

"On Monday I attended the Missionary Conference for two hours, and then the Bishop drove us to the fort, the tomb of Runjit Singh, and the great mosque where, the Moslem Commissioner told us, 2000 had been praying that afternoon for Lord Ripon, as they felt so deep a regard for him, seeing the Government had helped them to rebuild their mosque.

"At Benares Edward's kind friend, Mr. Hackett, the C.M.S. Missionary, met us and took us to his pleasant home in the suburbs. Mrs. Hackett is the granddaughter of a delightful old lady who has a beautiful estate there, a Mrs. Kennedy, who will be 94 in March; but she is as active as if she were 24. She was married at 15, had 18 children, of whom 8 are still alive, the eldest being her dear boy of 75 years! She has scores of grandchildren and great grandchildren, having had 169 direct descendants born to her, of whom 118 are still alive. She has lived all her life in India, and lost eight of her family in the Mutiny. She always uses your Grandfather's book of family prayers, and knows our little 'Home Call' quite well. So we were made welcome by her, and I gave her 'The Shadowed Home.' Benares is the stronghold of Hinduism, and poor humanity seems enslaved in the bitterest slavery there. The day we arrived we drove to the Monkey Temple, where were at least 100 monkeys overrunning every part of it, doorways and roofs and sculptures and images. It was piteous to see the devotees, as they entered the shrine, and seemed to pray to the hideous idol, and struck a suspended bell ere they went out, their worship done. Then we went to a lecture

by Mr. Hooper in the large divinity school, on 'The image of God being the dignity of man,' to the learned natives of Benares. There were some sixty men present, more than half of them young men. Mr. Hooper invited discussion afterwards, and I spoke and others."

He describes a row down the Ganges, where they passed close to one of the burning ghats on which they burn the dead, also a visit to the Golden Temple with its Well of Knowledge. "Surely," he says, "in Benares, Satan's Throne is." He visited also the Maharajah, to whom they had a letter of introduction, and he preached on Sunday at the Station Church.

"At Calcutta the kind Bishop (Dr. Johnson) had sent his carriage for us (the same carriage which Bishop Wilson had) and met us on the staircase; his sisters soon came and gave us the kindest welcome, though at seven in the morning. The Bishop gave his charge to some 65 clergy in the Cathedral; it was a good, large-hearted charge.

"I am (D.V.) to preach twice on Sunday. This afternoon M., Edward, the Bishop of Colombo and I called on Keshub Chunder Sen, to whom I had sent Professor Monier-Williams' note of introduction. He was most courteous and interesting, and showed us his little prayer-meeting room in his house. I gave him my poem, of which the Professor had written to him. We must try and hear him give an address next Saturday afternoon. We had a capital Missionary meeting last night from 9 to 11 o'clock in the Town Hall. Mr. Whitley, from Chota Nagpore, gave a most interesting account of his (S.P.G.) work among the aboriginal Gonds, dear Mr. Vaughan a glowing

address on the C.M.S. work of the last 25 years, Edward on school work and bazaar preaching, and I a short address at the end on ‘How it strikes a stranger.’”

On January 18, the party went to Darjeeling. Returning on the 22nd, Mr. Bickersteth writes—

“We had the most charming four days’ outing. It was a great matter to travel nearly 800 miles to see mountains that might be wrapt in mist and cloud, but God was most gracious to us, and we have seen scenery we can never forget.”

The entire description, which is too long to give, closes thus—

“On Friday morning I was out by 6. The moon was up and not a single cloud between us and the whole range of mountains. We can never forget the sight, it was a pearl-like transparency, something so ethereal and tender; it did not seem of the world, but it might have been the steps of heaven let down to earth.”

On his return to Calcutta, he heard the address from Keshub Chunder Sen, when about 3000 men were present. “A torrent of eloquence; he has reached Deism,” was the comment.

“This morning I preached to an excellent congregation in the Old Church; they had the Benedicite, which after Darjeeling was the utterance of my heart.” The next letter was from Bombay, January 28, 1881, whither they had travelled from Calcutta, having parted from Edward Bickersteth at Allahabad, with overflowing thankfulness for the great mercies of ten weeks

together. The party sailed from Bombay in the *Speke Hall*, on Saturday, January 29, and reached Suez on February 10, having had a smooth voyage. After a short trip to Cairo and the Pyramids, they sailed from Alexandria to Jaffa, where, on February 19, they visited the schools for girls and boys carried on by Miss Arnott and Miss Davison. The former was a great admirer of "Yesterday, To-day and For Ever," and a clergyman who had sailed with them from Alexandria told the author that he owed to it his first deep religious impressions.

They met Canon Tristram (of Durham) in Jerusalem, and joined his party for a trip to the East of Jordan. Mr. Bickersteth writes—

"Tristram is the life of the party, plucking every rare flower and shooting rare birds. He thinks it well the Arabs should know that we are armed. Our Bedouin Chief, whom he upbraided with pillaging travellers while professing to be a pious man, replied, 'It is indeed true ; I am a pious man. But if God spreads a plentiful breakfast before me, should I not be very ungrateful not to partake of it ? And if I see a party of unarmed travellers, God has given them to me ; why should I refuse His gift ? If, however, they are armed, it is different. I might happen to get an ugly wound. I will let them alone.'"

Accounts of visits to Elealeh, Nebo, Mediba and Rabbath Ammon, which were delightful, must be passed over. They arrived at Es Salt, or Ramoth Gilead, on March 5, after a very rough journey. He says—

"All the Christians of the place turned out to welcome us. Mahaba (or Welcome) was heard on every side, and Mr. Jamal, David's brother, the C.M.S. Native Missionary, received us more hospitably than I can say. Having four rooms in his house, he turned all his family into one, giving us three, and providing another in a Christian's house for three of our gentlemen.

"Yesterday, Sunday, was a most delightful day. There are about 350 Protestant Christians here, full of love and zeal. Service was at 9 o'clock. The church, which is in Mr. Jamal's court, was quite filled. There were fine, intelligent faces. The service was in Arabic, a most melodious language. I preached a short sermon, which Mr. Jamal interpreted. There would have been more people, but several of the Christians are away with their flocks on the lower grounds. After dinner they came flocking into the house to salute us, and said that the memory of the day would live in their hearts for years. In the afternoon there was the litany, and the children and adults were catechized. Tristram addressed them on 'The little Israelitish maid,' and I spoke to them on the Irish prayer, and gave them copies.

Five of us walked to the double summit of Mount Gilead, one of which commands the upper valley of the Jordan, with the river Jabbok running through it (its jagged channel was clearly marked in the plain below us), and the other commanding the plain of Jericho and the Dead Sea and Nebo. It is wonderful to see what fresh life has been poured into the country since Tristram was here last. Five hundred new vineyards have been planted during the last five or six years. The mountain is now planted to its very summit. The inhabitants of Salt are increasing every month, and it now numbers eleven thousand. It is

delightful to see the Missionary love and zeal here. We examined the schools this morning, such quick-witted handsome boys and girls, so many Moslems under instruction, and such love pervading the whole work. To-night we have had a long consultation with Mr. Jamal, as to the best means for gathering in the harvest of souls. The church and schools are too small, and they sorely want a separate school for girls, a Zenana or Harem Missionary woman, and a Medical Missionary. I trust our report may persuade the C.M.S. to do more.

The Governor, whom I went to see, told me that he was so convinced of the goodness of the Mission School, that he was going to take his son, a boy of nine years, from the Moslem School where he had been for a year and a half, and now could not read a verse in the Koran, and send him to our school. This was good news, as it will have great effect upon the other Mahomedans here. All the Christians had gathered to bid us farewell, kissing our hands and pressing them to their foreheads. Then we filed out of the narrow gate, through the steep, rugged streets, and climbing the precipitous cliff on one side of the valley, we came suddenly upon seventy-five of the school-children, whom the master had brought out to stand on a knoll over which we rode, to bid us farewell. They sang the most beautiful Arabic hymn, which Mr. Jamal translated, committing us to the care of God, and then the dear children clustered round us and kissed our hands. We could hardly get away from them. Again and again they bade us farewell, and as we rode down the rocks into the steep defile, they ranged themselves on the edge of the hill and shouted their hurrahs till we were out of sight. Mr. Jamal accompanied us on horseback some way further.

Again there was hearty kissing between David and his relations, and we felt indeed what true primitive Christian love pervaded that rising Church."

His letters written during the Palestine tour contain vivid descriptions of travel, and have the charm of his poetic fancy and scriptural knowledge, but their Missionary character is not so pronounced as that of the Indian series. He visited the Stations wherever he went, cheering and being cheered by those who, to use his own words, "were in the high places of the field." At Damascus he visited the cemetery where Jane Frances, Countess Teleki, the only daughter of his uncle, Henry Bickersteth, Lord Langdale, was laid to rest in 1870. He writes: "How little I thought when I saw her such a thing of beauty the year my father died, that I should stand beside her grave in a far-off land." At Beyrouth, April 10, he adds—

"I addressed the children of the British Syrian Schools, which are full, brimful of life and interest, and preached this morning on, 'Let not your heart be troubled,' to a large congregation in the American Presbyterian Church, which they allowed us to use for an Episcopal Service. We are to have the Holy Communion this afternoon and an evening Conference.

"The work of Christ going on here is most encouraging, and every mission field seems to tell its own tale of the joy of unselfish labour for the Master. His labourers are so happy and can sing over their work. What a mercy to have the humblest share in it! We had an interesting insight into the British Syrian Schools yesterday.

I took a Bible-class with all the children, which seemed wonderfully to interest them, on Heaven."

"Smyrna, Good Friday.

"To-day has been the strangest Good Friday I ever spent. We were wakened at 2 a.m. by our steamer running against an ironclad vessel in the harbour of Scio. Thank God, not much mischief was done, though the collision partially stove in one of our boats, and snapped and twisted great bars of iron. We soon found ourselves, a motley group, on deck, half dressed, some awakened by the shock, and some longing to see Scio, which has been so seriously injured with earthquakes. There had been one twenty minutes before we landed, and only one house in the vast town is left unshaken."

The travellers reached Hampstead on the afternoon of April 28, 1881, after a short stay in Italy, having carried out almost to the letter the programme which they had marked out for themselves.

If this tour could not be said to have increased a Missionary enthusiasm which had long been at white heat, Mr. Bickersteth turned to admirable account the enriched experience, and the personal contact with the great problems of the Mission Field which it gave him.

The second of the Bishop's Missionary journeys was undertaken under different auspices ten years later. Edward Bickersteth had been working as Bishop at Tokyo since 1887, and it was natural that the English Bishop should visit his son in his own field of service. It was with the warm approval of Archbishop Benson that arrangements

were made for an absence of nearly five months from August, 1891. Bishop Barry, late of Sydney, undertook episcopal duty in the diocese, and Bishop Bickersteth, accompanied by his wife and his daughter May, sailed from Liverpool for Montreal on the ss. *Parisian*. The letters and diaries of those months are replete with graphic detail and picturesque description, which are very tempting, but a rigid economy of space is imperative. The beautiful scenery of the St. Lawrence, the majesty of Niagara, the impressiveness of the huge stretches of prairie, the rugged grandeur of the Rocky Mountains, were all duly recorded. One extract may be allowed in which he gave his impressions of Archbishop Tait, whose life he was reading—

“What a grand life of godly sincerity it is, and Davidson¹ has done his work, to my thinking, with a master’s hand to perfection. I have now read three-fourths of the two volumes, and feel it quite a solemn responsibility to have had such a noble example sketched before one’s mind’s-eye so vividly. It is very humbling, for there was nothing little about the man, just because his eye was single and his whole body full of light. What adds to the interest to me, is that the memoir revives the events, *quorum pars exigua fui.*”

The acme of joy and thankfulness was reached, in the meeting with Bishop Edward Bickersteth at Banff. He had been greatly prostrated by illness, and it was thought that the best thing for him would be a voyage to Vancouver and

¹ Archbishop of Canterbury.

back with his father, who thus describes their greeting—

“There, at Banff, on the station, was our beloved Edward, waiting to greet us. He looks well but worn, and has been very ill—a month in bed, but just recovered in time to come the voyage.”

The Bishop’s party embarked at Vancouver by the ss. *Empress of Japan*, on September 9, 1891, and after a somewhat rough voyage, especially towards the close, they landed in Yokohama on the 23rd. The charm of his personality had drawn not a few amongst the passengers into close interchange of thought with him. He writes—

“Several Americans have come and thanked me for my poem which they had read years ago, and one told me yesterday how it had been engraven on his soul, when tempted to make the accumulation of property his object in life, and especially the words I put in the mouth of Mammon, Book VI. All thanks to God.”

From Tokyo he wrote, on September 26—

“Such a hearty welcome by the brotherhood at St. Andrew’s. At the 5 p.m. service in the lovely little church, the St. Hilda’s and the St. Andrew’s party joined us in offering praise for our safe voyage. It was a great mercy escaping the typhoon they have had. We went all over St. Hilda’s on Thursday; it is a most thoughtfully and efficiently planned home, though just now the flowing tide of pupils has ebbed to thirty-four. The wave of thought has rather set against foreigners, but it will probably soon turn again. On Friday we

visited the Ladies' Institute, which is under Miss Macrae, her sister, and their band of teachers, and supplies the best education in Tokyo. It occupies a huge building, one wing of the Engineers' Institute, placed at the ladies' disposal by the Government for five years. There are some sixty-six huge rooms in it, most of which were empty, and about sixty pupils, but of the first families in Tokyo. There is no direct religious instruction in the morning school hours, but Miss Macrae has a class which all who like may attend. Edward said that the indirect influence for Christ was very good in the highest ranks. And Miss Macrae's sister told me that one of the first members of Government, who had been impressed by Christianity, overheard his young daughter praying in his home, and said, 'I can resist no longer; if my child prays like that, I must be a Christian.' And he did confess Christ, and was baptized. There is another pupil quite ready for baptism, but her father will not give his consent."

There are frequent accounts of addresses to Missionary workers, as well as to Japanese Christians.

On October 5 a vivid description is given of visits to Nikko and Ikao.

"Nikko is about ninety miles North of Tokyo, on the hills. There is an avenue of splendid pines twenty miles long leading from the plain to the tomb of Ieyasu, the greatest general and ruler Japan ever produced (born 1542, died 1616, at Nikko). The railway runs alongside this avenue and unceremoniously cuts across it. The great Shinto Temple, or Mausoleum, is in front of the tomb and hides it, but passing through the temple, up some two hundred and seventy steps, you find the

plain, and comparatively unadorned tomb under the open heaven, as if they felt ‘man at his best is altogether vanity.’ The Mausoleum was certainly superb with its carvings and colouring. The rich red pagoda among the pines was most striking, and the pines are marvellous. Edward, N., M., and I, with our arms stretched out, could nearly gird one of them. It must have been from twenty-five to thirty feet round, and this was only one of them.”

The entry in the Bishop’s diary on October 6th records a visit to Bishop Nicolai, of the Greek Church, who was out, but they saw his Cathedral and climbed its roof. On the day after he continues—

“ We went to Mrs. Kirkes’ ‘At Home’ for Japanese ladies of the highest circles and some distinguished men, who were wise, social, sympathetic, cultivated. I longed for power to plead for Christ, but see with Mrs. Kirkes, the importance of breaking down social prejudices. Her influence for the Gospel is very real.”

“ Friday, October 7.

“ Last night Edward had a large ‘At Home’ of more than a hundred and twenty guests, amongst whom were some most interesting Japanese ladies. I was especially attracted to a young man, the son of the Prime Minister, and also by Mr. Sannomiya, the Vice Chamberlain of the Empress’s Court. He married an English Churchwoman, and though he has not yet embraced Christianity, told me he was sure Japan would become Christian, and that on the lines of the English Church.

“ This afternoon we went to Mr. Moore’s house in the Mita school, one of the most important

educational institutions of Japan, with some two thousand boys. This was the scene of Mr. Lloyd's labours. Christianity is not taught during school hours, but the boys and young men are drawn to come to the Mission Chapel near by. The Principal of the school is a man of great mental power, and though favourably tolerant of Christianity and most courteous, is still an unbeliever. If he could be won, and others like him, and by God's grace become an advocate of the faith, Japan would feel the influence to its remotest limits."

On October 14, when they left Tokyo, he writes—

"It was really quite touching to find so many Japanese Christians as well as English friends on the railway platform to bid us God-speed on our journey to Nagoya. We enjoyed glorious views of Fuji, 12,365 feet high—*Memoria Technica* 12 months 365 days. Mr. Robinson and his catechist met us at the station. Yesterday (Sunday, October 18th), was most interesting. I walked down with Edward to their preaching house, which they use as their church. There was first the Confirmation (one old man of sixty and two young women were confirmed). Edward read the service, and addressed them in Japanese with the greatest fluency. The singing of two hymns was good, especially the Japanese version of Lyte's hymn, 'Jesus, I my cross have taken.' We then all received the Holy Communion—ten Japanese and five of us—the three confirmed communicating. It was to me a most touching service altogether, and full of prophetic hope for Japan, since Nagoya is a stronghold of Buddhism and one of the cities least touched by Western thought. Here there had been open

opposition. They had threatened to burn the preacher's house and stone the Missionaries, who, however, went very quietly about their work, not shrinking from any services, though they found they were sometimes guarded, unknown to themselves, by fifteen or twenty policemen, to prevent an assault being made on them. Now the opposition has ceased.

That afternoon the English-speaking of all denominations of Protestant Christians came to evensong in Mr. Robinson's house. We were thirty in number, and I preached to them from Rom. viii. 32. The message was heartily received. The old man, who was confirmed in the morning, when Mr. Robinson asked him what he meant to do with his idol, and its costly lacquered and gilded box, had said he thought he would sell it, as it was worth some thirty dollars. Mr. Robinson asked Edward and me what we should advise. It was a difficult question, as thirty dollars was a great sum to the poor old man. But the question was delightfully solved in the evening by the old man coming up to Mr. Robinson, and saying he would give it to him. Edward owes Mr. Robinson to Toronto. They sorely want a new church, and hope to secure a good site."

But the most exciting experience of their whole tour was the terrible earthquake, which occurred during their stay at Osaka on Wednesday, October 18th. Mercifully none of themselves or their kind friends, Archdeacon Warren and his family, whom they were visiting, were injured. The Bishop writes.

"On Tuesday evening the Archdeacon asked me to take their family prayers, and I had chosen

Psalm xci., and said a few words on our home in God, its security and blessedness. It was an oppressively hot night, but we slept, and the servant had brought us tea at 6.30; not having been very well, I was drinking it in bed, when we felt the first sway of the shock. But those we had experienced in Tokyo so soon ceased, we expected every oscillation would be the last, but they became stronger and stronger, till the house, though substantially built, shuddered and trembled and swerved to and fro, and one of the windows was burst open. I called to N. to come under the door frame, which, narrow as it was, would afford some shelter if the building fell. We were both in our night-dresses, and she was coming, when another shock dashed the door against my foot and hand, bruising them. However, I got the door open again, and I was thankful indeed to get N. under it. Here we stayed till the house righted itself and was still. Edward ran to the front door, unlocked it, and got into the garden, when he found the earth distinctly reeling under him. It was delightful to see the Archdeacon's beautiful spirit of childlike trustfulness and thankfulness. It seems almost selfish to write so much about ourselves, when thousands and tens of thousands have suffered so terribly."

The visits to Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe and Nagasaki, where the travellers embarked for Hong Kong, were of exceeding interest. The parting between father and son took place on Sunday, November 15th.

"At 9 o'clock, Japanese morning prayer and a Confirmation of three young men (two of them medical students) and four young women, with an earnest address from Edward. Then English

our Society has been led by God to send many labourers into that missionary field. I believe it will prove wise strategy in the great and good warfare we are waging.

"I was very thankful to learn lately from a missionary on furlough that during the last seven years there has been a marked change among the Japanese students at Tokyo : it was formerly their fashion during their college course to study Herbert Spencer and adopt agnosticism. Now they have grown tired of Spencer and devote themselves to books on political economy, their main object being to get their country on. But modern books undermine their old beliefs, they are wavering and dissatisfied, and come to the Missionaries with their questions. It is a great opportunity. Forgive my special interest in India (of which he had spoken) and Japan, where my eldest son, whom God has called to his rest, laboured for twenty years, first at Delhi as one of the Cambridge University Mission, and then in Tokio, for Jesus' sake and the Gospel's."

The Bishop's ardent love for the Church Missionary Society, and his life-long advocacy of its work, brought him into close and constant touch with its committee. Mr. Eugene Stock, for many years one of the lay secretaries, writes as follows respecting his connection with the Society, and his general interest in the cause of missions—

"No Bishop of our time has been so devoted to the foreign missionary enterprise, and so identified with its interests, as Bishop Bickersteth. In the following brief account of this phase of his life, we may glance at his connection with the Church Missionary Society, and his utterances on the subject of missions—

I

"His connection with the Church Missionary Society dates, of course, from his earliest years, concerning which this is not the place to speak. In the Society's own records the first notable service of his to the cause is writing a Missionary hymn for the Society's Jubilee, 1848-9. That hymn, 'O, brothers, lift your voices,' is popular to this day in Church Missionary Society circles, and indeed wherever the Hymnal Companion is in use. It was a unique privilege, which he highly valued, when it fell to him, at the close of another fifty years, to write the principal hymn for the Society's Centenary; and he produced the now well-known 'For My sake and the Gospel's, go,' the popularity of which, well deserved for its own merits, has been helped, by Sir A. Sullivan's permission, to link with it his famous tune composed for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

"During the whole period of Mr. Bickersteth's incumbency of Christ Church, Hampstead, he was a valued member of the Church Missionary Society Committee. Although not one of the most prominent in its discussions, and unable to give time to attend its numerous subsidiary committees, he could always be depended upon for counsel on important occasions, especially when private matters arising out of the relations of individual missionaries to the committee, or to each other had to be dealt with. At such times his loving and generous nature made his influence specially important. On controversial questions he was always on the moderate side, and in his later years he was a real help in this respect to Mr. Wigram.

"Mr. Bickersteth's services to the Society in regard to its funds were of unique value. Again and again, when deficits were reported, owing to

the expansion of the work growing faster than the income, he started additional funds to meet the difficulty. In 1880, for instance, he wrote a powerful letter, headed by the words with which his Centenary hymn opened eighteen years later, ‘For My sake and the Gospel’s,’ and urging a higher scale of subscription, to exemplify which he and three other friends promised to give thenceforth £100 a year each. At the same time he handed the Society £1000 to start a new mission to the Bhil tribes in Rajpatana (and a second £1000 a few years later), his interest in them having been awakened by the residence in their neighbourhood of one of his daughters, who was married to an Anglo-Indian officer. Then in 1882 he wrote proposing to increase the income by ‘half as much again,’ and by way of illustration advanced his own subscription from £100 to £150. Many contributors followed his example; but subscriptions are only a part of a Society’s resources, and church collections generally were unaffected by the appeal, while a legacy of £1000 did not become £1500 because Mr. Bickersteth had written his letter. So the result he aimed at was not achieved then, nor for several years after; but his own generosity was none the less on that account. Meanwhile his own congregation at Christ Church responded well to his frequent appeals, and he was not content until their annual contribution had reached £1000.

“But the most remarkable of his efforts of the kind was in 1884–5. The Society was sorely pressed for office room, the work having so greatly increased since its house was built in 1862; but the committee were not willing to apply missionary contributions to its enlargement. Then Mr. Bickersteth, independently of them, published a proposal that substantial sums (say £250, but not less than £100) should be given by friends ‘in memory of departed

brothers and sisters in Christ,' whose names, thus commemorated, should be inscribed on a tablet in the house. The response exceeded his anticipations. In less than twelve months £18,000 was thus contributed, which not only paid the whole cost of enlargement, but substantially reduced an old mortgage also. The new wing, so provided, had a personal interest for him; for it stood on the site of the old hired house occupied from 1813 to 1862, the house in which his father, Edward Bickersteth, the secretary, had lived for some years.

II

"Although we take the Bishop's utterances regarding Missions under a separate head, very many of them might well be reckoned among his services to the C.M.S. He was three times a speaker at the Annual Meeting; and the other contemporaries of his who spoke as often were J. C. Miller, J. C. Ryle, E. Hoare, and Archbishop Temple. (In earlier days, when there were fewer men to be asked, there were some who spoke oftener.)

"He presided at the Evening Meeting of 1885, just after his consecration, and only the day before he left London for Exeter. The Annual Sermon at St. Bride's, which only one man in the whole century has preached twice (Bishop Wilson, of Calcutta), was delivered by Bishop Bickersteth in 1888. His subject was 'The Gospel of the glory of the Blessed God, which was committed to my trust' (1 Tim. i. 14, R.V.); and from the words 'committed to my trust' he drew an appeal for personal service in the mission field which has never been surpassed, if ever equalled, for tender yet forceful earnestness. He did not even shrink from facing the possible question, 'Why

don't you go yourself?'—affirming his readiness to go if plainly called by his Divine Master even then, when he had attained the age at which his father had died. Other sermons of his on special occasions are still remembered: at St. James's, Paddington, for instance, in 1881, at the ordination of four missionaries, when he rendered St. Peter's word for 'love,' in St. John xxi. ($\phi\lambda\omega$), '*cleave unto,*' after the usage of the Septuagint, and again at Lambeth Palace Chapel in 1883, at the consecration of A. W. Poole as first English Bishop for Japan, when from St. Mark iii. 14, 15—'the account of the first ordination'—he drew the threefold duty of the Christian ministry, viz. 'to be with Jesus, to preach His word, and to do His works.'

"But perhaps the occasion of speaking at a C.M.S. function which gave him deepest satisfaction was the Second Jubilee Meeting, on November 1, 1898.¹ He had been present as a young clergyman at the First Jubilee Meeting in 1848, and now he was privileged to occupy the chair at the Second Jubilee. As far as was known, only two other persons were present who had also been present in 1848, and both of them spoke, viz. the Rev. W. Salter Price (the East African missionary) and Mr. Eugene Stock. It was an occasion which drew forth all the tender thankfulness and sympathetic joy which always characterized the Bishop.

Bishop Bickersteth took no narrow view of the Church's missionary agencies. Although his hereditary connexion was with the C.M.S., and

¹ The first Jubilee was celebrated in the middle of the fiftieth year, not at its close. It was therefore arranged to hold a second Jubilee meeting on the corresponding day in the hundredth year (November 1), in anticipation of the centenary celebration in the following April, when the century was complete.

his sympathies were with its work first of all, he was no half-hearted or hesitating friend of the S.P.G., and in the Exeter diocese he promoted its interests with equal fervour. Even if he had not valued, as he truly did, its great work both in the Colonies and in non-Christian lands, the fact of the Cambridge Delhi Mission, founded by his eldest son, being affiliated to the S.P.G., would of itself have secured his co-operation for the Society. His hearty wish was to see all the Church Societies drawn more together, not by Utopian schemes of amalgamation, but by ever-increasing mutual appreciation and respect.

"So devoted was the Bishop to the cause of Evangelization, that he could not refuse sympathy to any sincere effort to preach Christ to the heathen. He could not confine that sympathy within the bounds of the Church of England, dearly as he loved it; and when the last great General Conference on Missions was held in 1888—almost all Protestant Societies being represented—Dr. Bickersteth was the one English Bishop who saw his way to take part, coming up from Exeter expressly for the purpose.

Bishop Bickersteth was frequently invited to take part in the Church Congress. Generally, and naturally, the place allotted to him was in the session devoted to the consideration of the spiritual life, or the Ministry; but at Wakefield, in 1896, he contributed a remarkable paper on a burning missionary question, the Baptism of Polygamists. On this subject the Bishop held a view different from that most common among missionaries, and indeed among Churchmen generally. The problem is not so easy as might be imagined. Of course, any baptized Christian taking more than one wife would be excommunicated, upon that all are agreed. But suppose a heathen chief were

converted who has three wives already, all lawful wives according to the custom of the country; and suppose, as Bishop Bickersteth put it, ‘the first in order of time is old and childless, the second the mother of all his children, the third, the last married and best beloved.’ If he is to put away two of the three before baptism, which is he to keep? And what is the condition of the two put away? Are they to be counted as married or single? Can they marry other men? And what of the children (if any) of those put away? The Bishop advocated a certain liberty in such circumstances. He took the same line at the Lambeth Conference of 1888, and was supported by several other Bishops. But the majority was against him. By 83 votes to 21, the Conference decided that a converted polygamist should not be baptized, but should continue a catechumen until he should be ‘in a position to accept the law of Christ,’ but on the other hand, by 54 to 34, that the wives of polygamists might be baptized in certain circumstances to be decided on locally.

“At the Folkestone Congress, in 1892, the Bishop was again invited to read a paper on a Missionary subject, ‘Variety of Methods,’ in which he showed his intimate knowledge of the actual circumstances and problems of the Mission field.”

CHAPTER VIII

1900–1906

Resignation—Diocesan Conference—Resolutions—Freedom of the City of Exeter — Removal to London — Illness — Death — Tributes — Recapitulation.

“ Be the day short or never so long,
At length it ringeth to evensong.”

From JOHN HEYWOOD'S
“Collection of English Proverbs,” 1546.¹

THE Bishop had a sharp attack of influenza in the early spring of 1900, which greatly weakened him. And although he resumed work with his usual ardour, the severity of the strain upon his powers soon became evident. The summer holiday of this year did not bring him its wonted renewal of vigour, and he felt that he must face the question of retirement. In September he sent in his resignation to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who forwarded it to Lord Salisbury. He received a very kind letter from the Prime Minister signifying his regret for the cause which led the Bishop to relinquish his office, together with warm expressions of personal regard. He retired on a

¹ In Heywood's book the couplet is given thus :

“ Be the day never so long
Evermore they ring to Evensong.”

As given in the text the words were used at the moment of his death by George Tankerville, who was burnt at the stake in 1555.

proportion of the income of the see, which was considerably less than the amount allowed by statute under the Bishops' Resignation Act.

The pain of parting from many whom he loved weighed heavily upon his spirit; but the stronghold to which he had resorted for more than three score years was his place of refuge, and he took shelter there as the shadows of life's evening and the sorrows of superannuation gathered about him.

The tidings that the Bishop had resigned occasioned universal regret, and the diocese rose up and called him blessed. The most affecting expressions of sorrow came from persons of all classes and creeds. There was not a parish in which there did not exist some link with its chief pastor—not alone from persons who had been confirmed by him or had listened to his pleadings in sermons and addresses, for almost all the religiously minded knew the hymn, "Peace, perfect Peace," and many also his "Pray, always Pray." Letters came by the score testifying the depth and extent of the affection borne by the people of the Diocese towards their Father in God.

The Bishop took a final farewell of his clergy and laity at the Diocesan Conference which met on October 16th. In his parting address he dwelt upon the years spent by him in their midst, mentioning by name a large number of those who had rendered signal help in the manifold departments of his work, and thanking them in words both graceful and discriminating, for all the kindness he had received at their hands.

The Lord-lieutenant of the County, Lord Clinton, moved the following resolutions :—

“ That the members of this Conference recognize in the determination of the Lord Bishop to resign the charge of the diocese, evidence of the high sense of his obligation to his great office, and the maintenance of the high standard of public duty which he advocated in the days of his strength, and now vindicates in his advancing years.

“ They hear also with great regret of the failure of his health, and his increasing weakness.

“ They receive his decision with grateful recollections of the courtesy, the devotion, the fairness of all his relations not only with the Diocesan Conference, but with the diocese at large.

“ They rejoice to think that in the fifteen years of his episcopate he has made himself acquainted with all classes of the community, and approved himself to all as a true father in God.

“ They respectfully offer the assurance of their enduring regard for all the members of his family, who have united with him in making the Palace a scene of diocesan hospitality and a centre of good works.

“ They earnestly pray that the relief which the Bishop is seeking from the increasing burden of a diocesan episcopate may, by the will of Almighty God, issue in a prolonging of his days, and enable him to add to his services to the Church at large, in those fields of literature in which he has made for himself an enduring name.”

In supporting the resolution, the Archdeacon of Exeter said—

“ The Lord-lieutenant has spoken with feeling, with dignity, and with eloquence to this motion,

and he has spoken, no one can doubt, as a religious man who is interested in the subject on which he has spoken. But he has of necessity spoken as a layman, and it is my duty and privilege in some way to represent the priests and the deacons. I am glad to do so, because I feel that the Bishop whom we honour, respect, and love, is a man who has done much to teach us clergy how we ought to obey the deepest duty which we owe to the laity, and to the people of this country and this nation. I say that advisedly, because what the people of this country consciously or unconsciously most desire at the hands of the clergy is something more than activity. They desire activity, no doubt, and they have had a very considerable amount of it during your lordship's episcopate. They desire also intellectual force, and they must have it; but the thing which they most desire, whether they know it or do not, is neither the expression of energy or force, but manifestation on the part of the clergy of the life that is hid with Christ in God. What they most need is this manifestation of something which in this active, busy, material age speaks of the Heavens above, and leads men to lift up their hearts. And while your lordship has done a great deal more of active work than any one of us quite realizes, your words just spoken have brought out this higher service in a simple but in a very remarkable manner. The thing that you have taught the clergy is just this, that their chief aim must be to make the people feel that the clergy are men of God, and have spirituality of soul within them.

"My lord, I say it in your presence—all that you do is so simple and natural that I don't think we need be very particular about whether our words are spoken in your presence or not—that you have been to many the best example of the

best kind of piety which we used to see among the best clergy in the days when we were young. It belongs to no party, it belongs to all parties. But I fear it is rarer now than it was in days gone by. This is activity. Thank God for it. But we want behind activity the piety which makes the activity tell. It has been my privilege to know a few of the leaders of the English Church. And there stand out two who are conspicuous for this very thing of which I am speaking. And it came to pass that these two men were on the selfsame day consecrated to the episcopate of the English Church. One was the saintly Bishop of Lincoln, and I am not afraid to canonize our own Bishop during his lifetime—the other, was the saintly Bishop of Exeter. Men of different schools and different opinions in some respects (though I do not believe in very many), both showed what will be the greatest power in holding the English Church together in the days to come. It has been good for us, both clergy and laity, to have been here in this diocese during your episcopate. The diocese has been overshadowed by a courteous, gentle, heavenly influence, which has reached far and wide, and has penetrated to all sorts and conditions of men.

“For there was in your words just spoken that which showed care not only for the great, but for the small, for the young as well as for the old; and I am quite certain that in the days to come there will be many among the poorest of this county, and among the simple and least educated, who will cherish in their memories a sight which they once had of a Bishop, who was a true man of God, and the memory of words that have been a blessing to them ever since they first heard them uttered. I pray that this influence will long live—the influence of that heavenly spirit and the

influence of that loving heart. I pray that in the days to come, to which you have alluded—the days of increasing activity—that if in the midst of this activity we are tempted to lose something of the spirit of true Church fellowship, we may remember what we once saw of that spirit of love which held us all together. I believe, my lord, the legacy will still remain. I trust it may, and I hope and believe it will. I am quite certain you will not be forgotten, because it will be impossible to forget you—and after you yourself have gone, the influence of your loving presence will still abide.

A few weeks later, the Mayor and Corporation of Exeter conferred upon him the freedom of the City, the highest mark of distinction and appreciation which they could bestow upon any individual.

It was said of him—

“ His fatherliness and loving sympathy are in all our hearts and he is sorely missed. Few Bishops in a roll containing many great names have left so deep and abiding a mark for good, the impression of the mighty power of love and holiness.”

Another writes—“ I feel sure that no Bishop ever parted from his diocese more universally venerated and beloved than the Bishop of Exeter.”

The late Prebendary Bramley, Rector of Uffculme, and afterwards Sub-Dean of the Cathedral, wrote to him, “ I have never forgotten the two days you spent with us at Uffculme, and the amount of good that you succeeded in doing during that time. It made a deep impression on me and on my people.” Prebendary Bramley also wrote of him, “ I hope we may get a good man to

succeed him. We shall not get one kinder, fairer, more earnest to help all that can promote our good."

Another, a well-known layman, wrote, "The nearer the time comes for your leaving, the less I like to think of it. It will be the hardest wrench Exeter has received during many years. I am very, very sorry."

There were also many most touching letters from his brother Bishops on his resignation. The Bishop of Southwark, Dr. E. S. Talbot, then Bishop of Rochester, wrote—

" You will have many letters just now, and perhaps they will only add to sadness and weariness. But yet may I add one little one which will be answered only by a handshake when we meet (as I trust) at Lambeth in November.

" For you have been too kind to me for the ending of your time amongst our brotherhood of active service to pass, without a word of affection and respect and gratitude from me. It was you who told me that I should find a real brotherliness in the Episcopal body, and you have always done your part to help me feel the truth of this.

" We shall miss a presence not only ever kindly and gentle, but always a reminder of the spirit which should go through all our business and work. I do trust that the comfort of the Holy Spirit will make the sadness of ending and leaving to be conquered by thankfulness and hope.

" Pray give those whom you leave the full help of the reservists' service of prayer, and not least one who so greatly needs it as myself."

The Bishop removed to London in December, 1900, and took a house in Westbourne Terrace

(No. 95), when it was hoped that a period of entire repose might restore him to a greater measure of strength. For a time it seemed as if this expectation would be realized. He could enjoy the society of his friends, go out to meetings, and was able to begin some literary work in the way of preparing his "Thoughts in Past Years," a book of occasional sermons for publication.

He was able also to take part in the consecration of his successor, Dr. H. E. Ryle, on his own birthday, January 25, 1901. But the improvement was not sustained, and the illness which was to last for more than five years gradually became worse. But he accepted the will of God concerning him with perfect submission and with childlike trust.

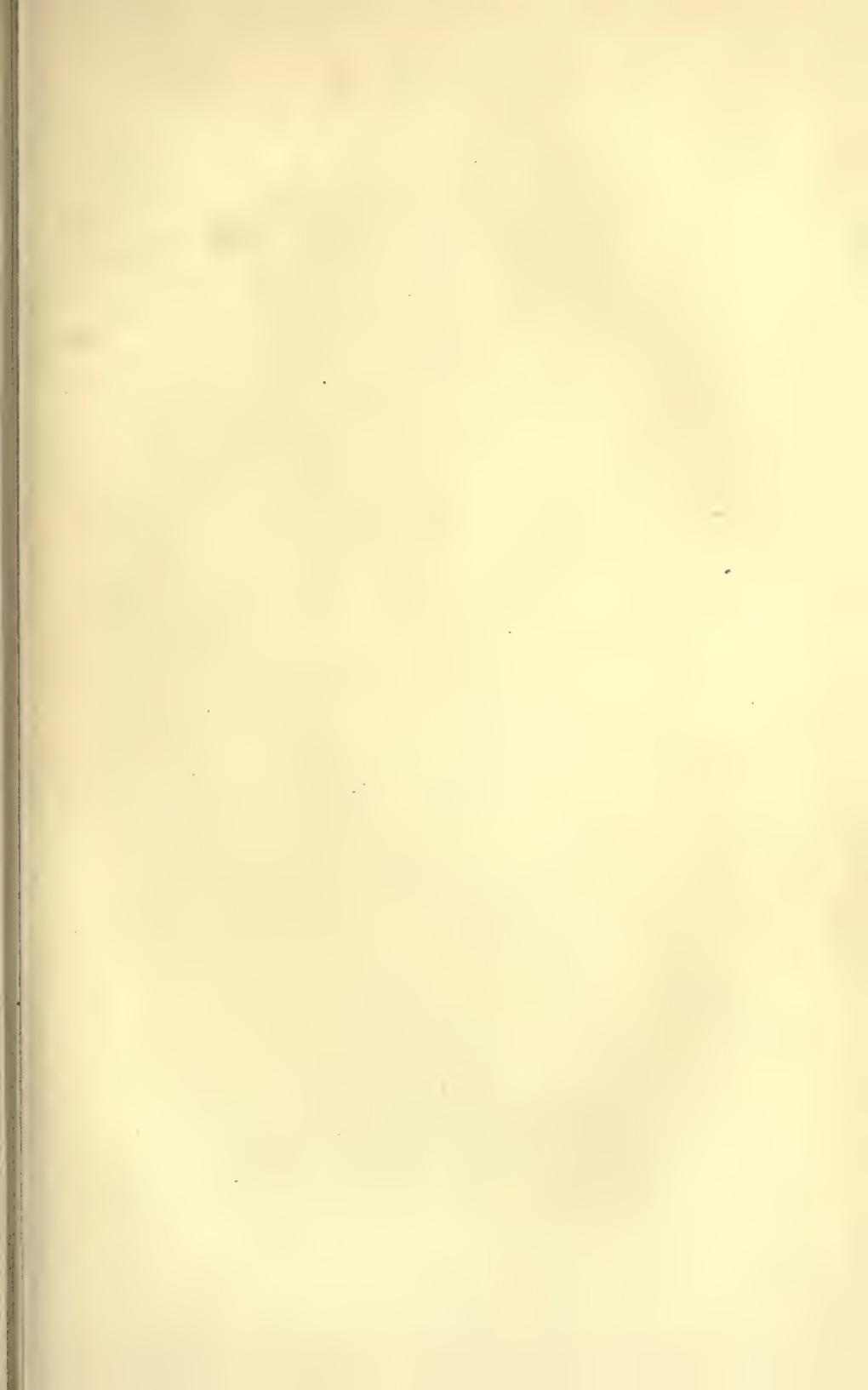
"Still loving man, still thanking God."

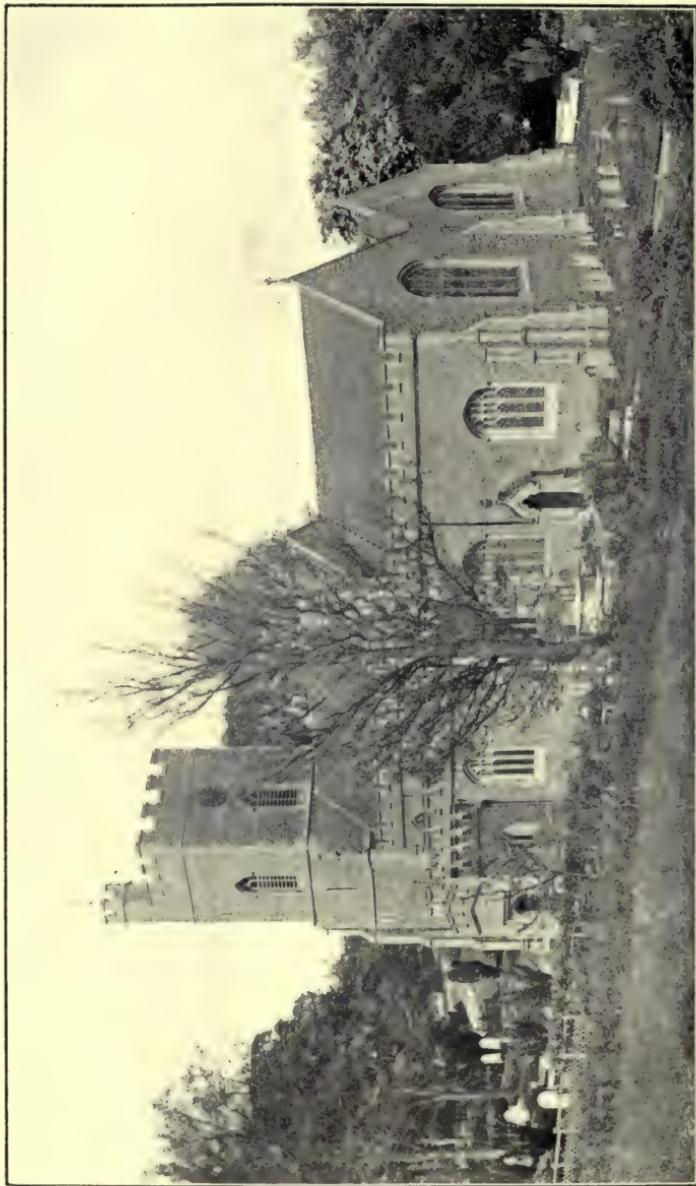
He was fond of repeating some lines from a hymn of John Newton's, which he had known from his early days—

"He that hath led me hitherto
Will lead me all my journey through,
And give me daily cause to raise
New Ebenezers to His' praise."

The warning that the end was approaching came a week beforehand, like the Seer's in "Yesterday, To-day and For Ever," and at 6.30 on the morning of May 16, 1906, in the presence of those dearest to him, the gentle loving spirit of Edward Henry Bickersteth took its flight and went home to God.

A simple but beautiful service was held at Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, and attended by





WATTON CHURCH.

a large and representative congregation of those who had worked with him at different times of his life. His hymn, "Peace, Perfect Peace," was sung, and the pall borne by eight of his grandsons. He was laid to rest amongst his kindred at Watton, where the Bishop of Crediton read the concluding prayers and pronounced the benediction. Amongst those gathered round the grave, were some aged people from the village who remembered him when he lived there as a boy.

Of the many tributes paid to the Bishop's memory in his old Diocese, two may be selected as expressing the sentiment which the tidings of his death evoked in many places. The first is by Chancellor Edmonds, preaching in the Cathedral at Exeter on the Sunday after his death, and the other from a sermon by the Rev. W. H. Coates, Vicar of Christ Church, Plymouth, a former Curate of the Bishop's at Christ Church, Hampstead.

At the conclusion of his sermon Canon Edmonds said—

"As we think here to-day of him who was gathered to his fathers yesterday, it is easy, it is pleasant to recall him. His gracious gentleness, his saintly ways were not passive things; they were the veil behind which there lay quietly active, high qualities of judgment and discernment, practised in other spheres among many types of men. We are accustomed to think of ours as an age of transition. So, also, was his. One of the world's own prophets speaks of himself and his contemporaries as 'brought up and nursed in hours of change, alarm, surprise.'

"His years of middle and later life were such

a time. But he had found shelter in a congenial ministerial sphere to grow ripe, and by early rising he made leisure to grow wise. His father and he touched each other to the finer issues of life, yet not at all points. He and his Bishop-son, into whom he once said, in my hearing, that ‘he had poured his soul,’ touched each other as closely. Yet not at all points. What was common to the three was common to us all. Theirs, indeed, it was, measured by whatever standard we please to apply to them, to live among men as men of God. That is the life that tells ; those are the labours that are not in vain.

“There is extant a fragment of biography, current ninety years ago, in which, at the western extremity of Cornwall, a well-known lady writes in her journal of the Bishop’s father, that she had gone into Penzance to a missionary meeting with Mr. Bickersteth,¹ ‘The glory of God,’ she said, ‘and the good of souls, everything that was holy, heavenly, and delightful, I felt in his conversation. Oh, it makes me long after holiness and heaven to meet with such, and I seem raised from the earth I dwell on.’ Well, brethren, during the fifteen years of Bishop Bickersteth’s episcopate he visited all but every parish in the diocese. In large numbers of them he stayed a night, and where he stayed, he left, when he went away, a blessing behind him. His visits, half fatherly, half brotherly, were the visits of a shepherd of souls : he gained ‘entrance,’ as St. Paul calls it, for himself. He valued that, but he valued it all the more because it gave him the opportunity of gaining an entrance for his Lord.

“He will live in the hearts of all who knew him. He will live in them for the best reasons. We love men for many reasons, we love men in various degrees, but we love those most who give

¹ Diary of Mrs. Lydia Grenfell.

our lives a lift heavenward, and this Bishop Bickersteth did, and was always doing. His place is in men's hearts, and he will keep his place. To him it has been given to write some hymns that the world will not willingly let die. His place in devotional poetry is with the immortals. As long as human life has sorrows or human hearts have grief, so long will hymns of his be part of the medicine of the Comforter, so long will 'Peace, Perfect Peace,' be found on the lips of those who are called to bear the inevitable discipline, of affliction and separation, of sorrow and of death.

"Brethren, will the coming days produce in the various ranks of men teachers and scholars like these? Shall we produce young apostles ready to fill the world with the cry of 'Obedience, obedience?' Shall the fathers to the children continue to proclaim the truth? Shall men come before God, with their sons and daughters at their feet, and say, 'Behold me and the children whom Thou hast given me?' At this moment of embittered controversy we may well ask the question, as we turn away from the little country church-yard where loving hands and loving hearts have paid their last public homage to Edward Henry, Bishop once of Exeter, husband, father, priest, Bishop, and in all relationships a man of God, a child of the most gracious influences of the past, a herald in prose and in verse of better things to come."

In the course of his sermon at Christ Church, Plymouth, Mr. Coates said—

"In the days when I was his senior curate, from 1878 to 1885, Hampstead was one of the most important suburbs of the great City of London. It was not only celebrated for its beauty,

but was above all things noted for the number of celebrated men and women, who made it their home. Art, literature, drama, Parliament, science, and law had many of their leading representatives dwelling there. Hence it came to pass that Christ Church, Hampstead, then held an almost unique position amid the Churches in the north-western part of the metropolis. It was in such a place, and to such a people, that Edward Henry Bickersteth ministered for thirty years; and there can be no greater tribute to the extraordinary power of his wonderful life than that he should have held together so large and intellectual a congregation, not by his learning, although he was undoubtedly a scholar, or even by his eloquence, but rather because of his transparent sincerity of purpose and his masterly grasp of those Holy Scriptures which he lived as well as preached.

"Just below his pulpit was a pew which was generally occupied by those who had either come from, or were going out to, missionary work in foreign lands; and it was a strange thing to watch those of different nationalities, black as well as the white, gazing up into that dreamy, heaven-lit face and being raised by his words and looks to a higher plane of spiritual conceptions, which should inspire them to purer lives and grander purposes. From that same pulpit I have heard the first public recitations of some of his most beautiful hymns; and to hear those hymns read by the poet who knew so well the leading thought which he desired most to accentuate, was not easily to be forgotten.

"But if as a preacher he was unique, as a pastor he was absolutely perfect in his consistency of conduct, his sympathy, and the almost child-likeness of his innocence. He was no recluse, and one of my most vivid and pleasant recollections of Hampstead is the remembrance of social

evenings in his hospitable house, where as a true gentleman he was seen at his best, talking and chatting with every one, and making everybody feel at home. Yet although ‘in the world, he was not of the world.’ It was curious to see how, without the least affectation or cant, he was able to make his guests feel that it was an almost natural thing not to separate without a hymn and a word of prayer. ‘I used often to wonder how he did it,’ said a City merchant to me, ‘but he was such a true saint of God we could not resent it, could we?’

“But perhaps, it was more in the hour of trouble than at any other time that Bickersteth was so wonderfully helpful. There was nothing artificial in his sympathy. To be with him was just to feel as though he had nobody else’s cares to think about and nobody else’s sorrow to soothe. No one was better able to whisper words of hope about the great unseen than the author of ‘Yesterday, To-day and For Ever,’ who simply seemed to live in it ; and I suppose that no saint has ever himself departed into the Paradise of God with keener anticipation than the good Bishop, who now sees and experiences what he so often pictured and sang about. As his curate for so many years—always made welcome under his roof, and ever permitted to enter into some of his most sacred confidences—I can truly say of Bishop Bickersteth that to know him was to love him.”

The Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Edward King, who was consecrated with him on April 25, 1885, wrote on hearing of his death—

“ Old Palace, Lincoln, July 28, 1906.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ I am so sorry that I have not thanked you for your kind note telling me of your dear

good father's departure. We were consecrated side by side, and for many years interchanged telegrams on the 25th of April. I shall always think of him with sincere gratitude for the consistent example of his gentle and holy life.

“With sincere sympathy,

“Believe me,

“Your's sincerely,

“E. LINCOLN.

“The Rev. H. V. Bickersteth.”

The Bishop of Crediton has kindly contributed recollections of Bishop Bickersteth in the following letter :—

“Exeter, July 4th, 1907.

“DEAR AGLIONBY,

“You ask me to write a short account of my recollections of our late revered Bishop. It is with a feeling of intense reverence, and appreciation of his wonderful love both for God and his fellow-men, filling me as I write, as it must fill all who really knew him, whenever one thinks of him. His memory is still fresh throughout the diocese as one greatly beloved for his fatherly, prayerful, and saintly episcopate.

“My first recollection of him was when he came for a Confirmation to my old parish. His simple sympathetic addresses appealed to the minds and thoughts of both candidates and congregation, and sent them home impressed with the solemnity of the service, and the effect it should have on their lives. On my asking him whether the long service tired him, he said, ‘I could never go on with it unless I believed that the Holy Spirit was in every case given through the laying on of hands.’

“In his short stay for the night in our house, he showed himself indeed as our Father in God, with his homely family spirit, taking at once the

keenest interest in our own and the children's welfare, as well as in the work of the parish.

"He also, at once, made all feel that his love for his fellow-men extended far beyond the limits of his own diocese, and how deep and wide was his missionary spirit. In writing to me on the subject and its connection with Cathedral life, he said, 'The third Canon should promote in every way the Foreign Missionary work of the diocese, both S.P.G. and C.M.S. For I deeply feel no diocese can prosper in spiritual life at home unless the great Evangelistic charge of our Lord (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20) is earnestly fulfilled.' For this purpose his candidates for Ordination were examined in some missionary subject and biography, with the object of winning their interest, and supplying them with useful information at the beginning of their ministerial life. It was his earnest desire that every parish, and indeed every parishioner, should be imbued with the missionary spirit, as a means of promoting general spiritual vitality.

"As one who later was closely associated with him in his work, not only as Canon, but as his Suffragan, when advancing years made his Episcopal duties more than he could undertake alone, I am glad to testify to the kindly courtesy and generous trustfulness of his dealings with those serving under him. Realizing fully his entire responsibility for all that was done in the diocese, he never gave over any part of his work to another without committing it and his fellow-worker in earnest prayer to God for His guidance and blessing on the undertaking. It was impossible not to feel the importance of a commission given in so solemn a manner.

"Full of absolute sincerity and purity of mind, he was generous in his judgment of others, giving

full justice to those who differed from him, making the most of each point of unity, and winning obedience to his wishes by the sheer force of his holy and fatherly personality. Even those in strong divergence of opinion from him speak with affectionate thankfulness of his quiet influence over them.

"Yet with all his gentleness he was shrewd and tactful in dealing with men. He was quick to distinguish and value sincerity, but quick also to suppress anything that fell short of it. He was gifted also with a patient as well as a calm disposition. On one occasion he showed me a drawer in his study table full of unanswered letters. 'These,' he said, with a merry smile, 'have all been acknowledged; and Time has been good enough to answer them for me; they have the merit of having answered themselves.'

"In Exeter we shall never forget the influence of his home life. It was a palace where love and hospitality ruled with well-regulated and unquestioned force. All were welcomed there as part of the great diocesan family, and little children were specially invited and made much of. It is remembered by a lady, who was calling at the palace some years ago, that the Bishop came into the drawing-room to see her with my little girl, his godchild, then only a year old, sitting on his shoulder, happily drumming on his head with a teaspoon. No child ever turned from or was afraid to go to him.

"There are other points which I feel should be mentioned, but I know they will already have been enlarged upon by other writers in your memoir. For instance, his poetic mind, which brought rhythm and poetry out of every event in his own and the nation's life, as well as his depth of thought and reading. I remember, when

in conversation with the late Earl Fortescue, not long before his death, he said to me, speaking of the Bishop's poetic mind and holiness of character—and he was no mean scholar either—‘I think the charm of his Conference addresses was his pretty scholarship, and apt quotations from the writings of scholars.’ A reference to these addresses would show this to be the case.

“I wish I could do more justice to the very real admiration and regard which I ever felt and ever shall feel for our late beloved Bishop. It was a real privilege to serve under one whose whole life was so completely dedicated to the worship and service of Almighty God, whose character was so saintly, and whose every wish and aim was attuned to the mind and will of his Divine Master.

“I am, dear Aglionby,

“Yours sincerely,

“ROBERT E. CREDITON.”

The following extract is from an article in the *Record* upon Bishop Ryle’s translation in April, 1903:—

“Bishop Ryle’s two predecessors were in differing ways gifted men. One for strength, the other for tenderness, came soon to be distinguished. Archbishop Temple pushed along, carrying work and workmen with him in an enthusiasm of labour, Bishop Bickersteth fell upon his people like dew. He came to the parishes and went his way, and those whom he visited found themselves refreshed.”

Although five years had passed away since the Bishop’s withdrawal from public life, the great number of notices in the Press, and of allusions

to him both in Churches and Chapels, especially in his old Diocese, showed that he was still held in loving remembrance. It is sometimes said that good men are very soon forgotten, and that their memories fade away :

“Fast as the evening sunbeams from the sea.”

However much of truth there may be in this view, the death of Bishop Bickersteth shows us that men do remember, that they carry deep down in their hearts the recollection of those who have given them real spiritual help, who have been the means of bringing them nearer to God. And to him it had been granted in very large measure to do service of this kind.

Any estimate of Edward Henry Bickersteth must take into account, first of all, the impression which he left upon the minds of his contemporaries. The ecclesiastical historian will not, perhaps, reckon him amongst the great Bishops of the Church ; but those who shall seek to gauge the deeper religious influences at work in the Church of England during the later years of the nineteenth century, will accord him a real recognition as being amongst those who wielded them. His gifts belonged to an order which is higher than that of intellectual brilliancy or organizing faculty, gifts which make the greatest display amongst men ; but spiritual power is, after all, the highest and most potent of God’s gifts to His Church, and men everywhere were impressed with the Bishop’s spirituality of mind ; they said to themselves concerning him ; “This is an holy man of God.”

His gentleness, that hall-mark of true greatness, was manifest to all who ever met him: and linked with it, too, as in St. Paul's enumeration of the fruits of the Spirit was the sister grace of *goodness*, the perpetual disposition to do good everywhere and to every one.

The Bishop was pre-eminently a man of prayer. It might be truly said that he would rise "when it was a great while before day," in order to redeem time for communion with God. He felt that "he must look into the face of God before he looked into the face of man:" and thus he "had power with God and with men." He would often quote the words, "The government is upon His shoulder," as referring to the never-failing providence of God and His superintendence over the affairs of His Church and people. It seemed perfectly natural when he said, as he would very often say of any matter in which he wanted guidance, "I will pray about it." And it was habitual with him to bring everything which he undertook to the Throne of Grace, every plan, every purpose, every perplexity. Hence his serenity, his sunny-heartedness, his cheerfulness, his courage, his childlike confidence that all things must work together for good.

And then, there were his largeness of heart in prayer, his fervent and effectual intercessions, embracing as they did, individuals, Churches, Parishes, enterprises of all kinds at home and abroad, "Church, King and Country," those who were preaching the everlasting Gospel to the heathen, watchers, workers, soldiers, sailors, the afflicted, the bereaved, the poor,

the destitute. He once asked in an address to clergy, “Do you know what it is to wrestle an hour in prayer for a soul?” His auditors felt that he knew it. It came out on another occasion, that he had continued for the whole night in prayer for a murderer on the eve of execution.

He was also “mighty in the Scriptures,” which he may be said to have studied on his knees. Through them the voice of God seemed to speak to him, and though not in the ordinary sense of the term a popular preacher, he spoke with a freshness and power which seldom failed to touch the hearts of those who heard him.

It was no mere hearsay, for though he searched diligently and gathered knowledge of the sacred writings from many sources, he spoke, at first hand as it were, with meekness and humility but with strong conviction. “I believe, therefore have I spoken.” And thus, firm on the rock and strong in God he could—

“Stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.”

His Commentary shows a wide and deep knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and it was a matter for surprise that he found time to prepare it, amidst the pressure of parochial and public work; and in addition to this he often had literary undertakings in hand, being for a time the editor of a Magazine known as *Evening Hours*.

He was a staunch upholder of the older methods of interpretation, deprecating the adoption of the Revised Version for public worship, though he

valued it as a companion to the older translation. He naturally regarded the Higher Critics with a jealous vigilance, his motto being, "Prove all things ; hold fast that which is true."

All who knew the Bishop well, were struck by his generosity. To quote his own words, he knew "the holy hilarity of giving." His was a nature which delighted to give of its resources to others, and it will never be known to how many he ministered in their necessities. His large gifts to Missions, and to other causes, benevolent and philanthropic, were mainly earned by strenuous toil of brain and pen. The grateful affection which came to him in return was "good measure, pressed down and running over." It was a well-spring of happiness to him, to "be a helper of many."

Another trait which should be noted, was his love of children, whose hearts opened out to him as flowers to the sun. He introduced children's services in his Cathedral on Holy Innocents' Day, when he would give the addresses himself. He revived the ancient custom in Exeter Cathedral of the Bishop blessing the choristers on the Great Festivals. He also welcomed them at the Palace on Christmas Eve, when they would sing carols after dinner and receive hospitality. Throughout life he kept the guilelessness and joyousness of childhood ; he had the child's heart.

Method and diligence he carried into everything, and his powers of work were unusual. Few assuredly would have fewer wasted hours to mourn when life's day was done. He did much of his

reading on railway journeys, and, though active and alert, he never gave one the sense of being in a hurry. He exemplified a saying which he would now and then repeat, “Drive your work, do not let your work drive you.”

With a good business capacity and a clear head, he had the faculty of seizing the points at issue. Although too gentle and considerate to make a very successful chairman, he was firm when needful, and there were those who found beneath his mild exterior a foundation of adamant where moral and religious principle was concerned. In such cases he was inflexible and absolutely fearless ; he accepted no man’s person.

In social hours the charm of his personality was magnetic. His finely stored memory, his classical refinement of taste, his wide reading, his reminiscences of travel, his winning courtesy, his keen sense of humour made him the centre of attraction in every circle. He greatly enjoyed a good story, and could tell one himself with inimitable grace. Some will remember his merriment when he described something which happened to him shortly after his appointment. In speaking of his predecessor, he said that, “He was a crystal of many facets.” In the next morning’s paper he was reported as having said that “Dr. Temple was a Christian of many faces,” a mistake which he corrected post-haste in a letter to the Bishop of London.

On one occasion after a sermon by a well-known clergyman, he thanked the preacher, who said to him, “This is a sermon I preached thirty years

ago." "Indeed?" replied the Bishop. "It reminds one of *mummy wheat*."

His physical powers were above the average, and like many others thus endowed, he found recreation in turning from one pursuit to another quite as exacting as the one which he had left off. He also contrived to work on a very small allowance of sleep, being often up till long after midnight, and rising long before the busy world was astir, for his early communings with God.

His energy was unwearied, but it never degenerated into fussiness; it was tempered by geniality and kindness, by unfailing consideration for others, and by extraordinary thoughtfulness for their comfort. He had the tact and insight which come from love, and he would arouse interest and even enthusiasm for work in unexpected quarters.

For some years after his appointment as Bishop he enjoyed a game at tennis, rode, took long walks and climbed hills with a zest which does not often last until a man is sixty. The activity and pluck, shown by him whilst mounting the Eddystone in a rough sea, won the admiration of Sir Redvers Buller.

Although gifted with much shrewdness and sagacity, his judgments of men most often erred on the side of charity; he would think too highly of them, and sometimes he was disappointed. But he never grew suspicious, far less cynical. A favourite saying from *Paradise Lost* was often on his lips,

"*Suspicion sleeps at wisdom's gate.*"

He believed that men were likely to become trustworthy if you trusted them.

Now and then he mistook the meaning and intention of those with whom he had to do, where there were differences between them. He exaggerated points of agreement, and would persuade himself that they were nearer to his own way of thinking than they really were. This arose from "the charity which believeth all things," but which did not for the time take into account other factors of the case. It was a noble failing. His preferring others in love, his disposition "to make or find the best," will have appeared in his relations with those who did not see eye to eye with him in Church matters. For, after all, there is a mutual understanding, a holy freemasonry, as it were, between the souls of saintly men though they may be at opposite poles of theological thought, or move in very different zones of feeling and experience. In the presence of the Lord whom they love and serve, mistrust and suspicion melt away, barriers disappear and their oneness in Him is realized. When this has taken place there can be no abiding or serious estrangement afterwards. His intercourse with men like the Rev. G. R. Prynne,¹ the sainted High Church leader in Plymouth, was marked by much that was "lovely and of good report" on both sides. And by none of those who had been his clergy was his memory honoured with more reverence and affection, than by many of those

¹ See the correspondence with the Bishop in the "Life of Mr. Prynne."

belonging to that school of thought in the Exeter Diocese.

Alas ! for how many the world was poorer when he left it, and yet how different too for his having been with them, and for the holy example, the uplifting influence and the lessons of love and wisdom which he has left them. The words of one of his loveliest hymns will direct them to the waters of comfort during "the little while" which at the longest, must separate those on earth from those whose rest is won.

"Till He come, Oh let the words
Linger on the trembling chords ;
Let the little while between
In their golden light be seen ;
Let us think how heaven and home
Lie beyond that 'Till He come.'

When the weary ones we love
Enter on their rest above,
Seems the earth so poor and vast,
All our life-joy overcast ?
Hush, be every murmur dumb ;
It is only 'Till He come.'

Clouds and conflicts round us press ;
Would we have one sorrow less ?
All the sharpness of the Cross,
All that tells the world is loss,
Death and darkness, and the tomb,
Only whisper 'Till He come.'

See, the Feast of Love is spread,
Drink the Wine and break the Bread,
Sweet memorials till the Lord
Call us round His heavenly board ;
Some from earth, from glory some,
Severed only 'Till He come.'"

Such words may well bring to a close the story

of his own life, and may it be granted to all who have been helped by his influence, or inspired by his poetry, to follow in his footsteps and finally with him

"To rest for ever after earthly strife
In the calm light of everlasting life."

FINIS

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE literary executors of the late Cardinal Newman have kindly placed at the disposal of the writer the following letters upon the subject of the additional verse to the hymn "Lead, Kindly Light"—

"The Oratory, June 20, 1874.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I thank you very much for your kind letter and for your purpose of adding a note to your Hymnal on the subject of my verses.

"I agree with you that these verses are not a Hymn, nor are they suitable for singing, and it is that which at once surprises and gratifies me, and makes me thankful that in spite of their having no claim to be used as a hymn, they have made their way into so many collections.

"Thank you, too, for the beautiful memoir which you send. You have the greatest of consolations in your great trials. I am glad to have your little book, both for its own sake and as one of the many instances which are brought home to sad hearts, that the God of all grace has not forsaken us English in spite of our many sins.

"Very truly yours,

"JOHN H. NEWMAN.

"Rev. E. H. Bickersteth."

"The Palace, Exeter, September 3, 1890.

"DEAR SIR,

"You were good enough to correspond with me a year ago, on behalf of the late Cardinal Newman, regarding his hymn "Lead, Kindly Light," to which I had ventured to add a verse in the first edition of my 'Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer.'

"As I mentioned to you, I thought he had condoned my doing so in 1874, but I could not refer to his letter, as I

had given it to my son who is Bishop of the Church of England in Japan. But I wrote to my son for a copy of the Cardinal's letter, which he has sent me, and you may possibly like to have the copy of it which I enclose, as the second paragraph so clearly expresses the author's own estimate of a hymn now so universally prized. And I think, the first paragraph of his letter will explain, how I thought I had received his tacit consent to my continuing to print my lines after his beautiful Lyric in my Hymnal, if I added a note, as I offered to do, saying the last verse was written by myself. This note I added in the second Annotated Edition. The verse was founded on the Collect for S. John the Evangelist's Day, thus—

“ Meantime along the narrow rugged path,
Thyself hast trod,
Lead, Saviour, lead me home in childlike faith,
Home to my God,
To rest for ever after earthly strife
In the calm light of everlasting life.”

“ And the Cardinal had been pleased to say in his first note on the subject how he liked the verse in itself. And this no doubt helped me to interpret the first paragraph of the letter which I enclose, as I did. The third revised and enlarged Edition of my Hymnal will be issued very shortly. The hymn “ Lead, Kindly Light ” appears very early in the book among those for Evening Prayer, verbatim as it was written, without abridgement or addition. And my verse, which has been for twenty years appended to it in my Hymnal, is now banished to the end of the volume among the doxologies, refrains and sequels. The prayer it breathes is one in which I feel sure we shall all agree.

“ Believe me,
“ Yours sincerely,
“ E. H. EXON.”

“ The Rev. Father W. P. Neville.”

APPENDIX II

ON THE UNFINISHED EDITION OF THE COMMENTARY.

THE Rev. H. V. Bickersteth, for ten and a half years Chaplain to the Bishop, writes as follows :—

“ My father could not have been happy without some literary work on the stocks ; and so, when he had finished the third edition of his hymnal, in 1890, he soon commenced a task which occupied his intervals of leisure during the next few years, but which he was unable to complete. His plan embraced a fresh edition of his Commentary on the New Testament, with a careful review of the *renderings* of the Authorised Greek. To go deeply into matters of textual criticism would have involved deeper knowledge of the subject, and nearer access to libraries than he possessed. Time also forbade.¹ Though not himself in agreement with the Westcott and Hort theory, he practically let the text alone. He took the Authorised Greek as a basis, and then with great pains constantly weighed the renderings into English, with special references to any alterations in the 1611 version, made by the Revisers. The Revisers did not give their authorities, but the Bishop thought that if it could be shown that changes had received the support of such well-established versions, as Wycliffe’s, Tyndale’s, Cranmer’s, etc., the hasty criticism of some useful but apparently fresh translations would be disarmed. It is true that he started with a good deal of latent opposition to the 1881 revision, but it may be said that, though estimating it highly as a commentary from the first, after close and patient study he felt a growing thankfulness for much of the work done by these eminent scholars. The authorities which he chiefly used were :

¹ “ It is hard to get time to read,” said he to his brother Bishop of Truro, looking fondly at his library shelves. “ Well,” said the other, “ outside application is something.”

Wycliffe, Tyndale, Cranmer, Geneva, Rheims, Scholefield, Trench, Vaughan, Lightfoot, Chadwick, Ellicott, Burgon, Mayor, Miller, besides the judgments of other well-known commentators. He was genuinely dissident as to his labours, and expressed the view that if he could, under God, be the means of enriching the future Authorised Version of the English Bible, with but one or two renderings, he should feel more than repaid for his toil. And it was here that his felicity of diction, his *ρύθμος*, was likely to be of use. A former Bishop of Exeter had enriched our language by his rhythmical version of the Psalms, which held the day when the Authorised Version of 1611 took the place of the Great Bible of 1540."

Whether this would have been the result of any suggestion made by Bishop Bickersteth it is impossible to say. No true work is thrown away, but to submit patiently to the providence which left ten years of toil in an unfinished condition, involved the bearing of a cross of no light weight.

Some examples of renderings which the Bishop suggested are given, as being of interest to students.

I. In St. Matt. xi. 28, render *οἱ κοπιῶντες*, "Ye that are toilworn."

II. In 2 Cor. iv. 17, render *καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν*, "A far, far more excellent."

III. In 1 Thess. iv. 14, render *τὸν κοιμηθέντας δὰ τοῦ Ιησοῦν*, "Who were laid to sleep by Jesus."

IV. In Jas. v. 16, render *πολὺ ἵσχυει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη*, "Great is the force of a righteous man's wrestling prayer."

V. Eph. v. 24. The verse might be rendered, "Grace be with all whose love for our Lord Jesus Christ is imperishable" (*ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ*).

VI. In Rom. xvi. 25, render *χρόνοις αἰωνίοις στειγημένου*, "Which hath been kept in silence during times eternal" (measurable by ages).

VII. *πλοῖον, πλοιάριον, ναῦς*. It is difficult to translate these words in the New Testament so as to mark the distinction between them, but it seems best to render *πλοῖον*, "boat," on the small inland Sea of Galilee (See Tyndale, Revised

Version, etc.), and the same word “ship” on the Mediterranean Sea, *e.g.* in Acts xxvii. 2, where *πλοῖον* is equivalent to *ναῦς*, a vessel which we are told (in verse 37) held 276 persons. And *πλοιάριον* should always be rendered “a little boat.”

VIII. In St. Matt. ii. 6, render *ποιμάνει*, “who shall shepherd.” For this use of “shepherd,” cf. “Shepherding his bright fountains” (Shelley, *Arethusa*, ii. 262); also Rev. ii. 27, where *ποιμαινεῖ* implies inflexible righteousness, but the rod of iron is held in the hand of One who has a Shepherd’s heart.

IX. In St. Matt. iv. 6, *μὴποτε* indicates rather the unexpectedness of an occurrence than the uncertainty of the time when it may occur. It is here rendered “lest peradventure” (Wycliff); “lest perhaps” (Rheims); but “lest haply” (R. V.) well represent it in most places.

X. In St. Matt. viii. 20, render *κατασχηνώσεις*, “roosts;” cf. “He clapped his wings upon his roosts” (Dryden).

XI. In 1 Pet. iii. 18, render *προσαγάγῃ*, “give access;” cf. Rom. v. 1, 2.

XII. In 2 Cor. v. 19, render *τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλάγης* (with Tyndale, Cranmer, Geneva), “the preaching of the atonement.”

XIII. Acts viii. 30, *ἀρα γε γινώσκεις ἀ ἀναγίνωσκεις*. We cannot retain in an English translation the condensed thought and beauty of this question: “It is well thou art thus engaged; but does thy heart read what thine eye is reading?”

XIV. In St. John xi. 50, “Ye know nothing at all.” Not an imputation of crass ignorance, but of lack of penetration.

Also, St. John i. 11: “That which was His own,” and “They that were His own,” which brings out the distinction between *τὰ ἴδια* and *οἱ ἴδιοι*.

XV. In Rom ii. 18, render *κατηχούμενος*, “being schooled in” (cf. Shakespeare).

XVI. Many instances might be given where slight alterations are suggested to save rhythm, such as—Acts vii. 40, “We wist not what,” instead of “wot not what.”

In St. Luke ix. 12, render *κλίνειν*, “draw towards sunset,” instead of “wear away,” avoiding the repetition of “away.”

Rom. viii. 19, render *ἀποκάραδοκία*, “earnest expectance,” for euphony’s sake, before the words “creation” and “revelation,” in the same verse. “Expectance” and “expectancy” are used by Shakespeare and Milton.

APPENDIX III

THE following brief note on Bishop Edward Bickersteth, of South Tokyo, from the pen of Mr. Eugene Stock, will be of interest to those who have not read the life of him by his brother, the Rev. Dr. Bickersteth, Vicar of Leeds, which was published in 1899 :—

“Edward Bickersteth, Fellow of Pembroke, Cambridge, had been stirred up by intercourse with that distinguished missionary, T. Valpy French, to devote himself to a missionary career, and had been led also, by French, to plan a brotherhood (without vows) of Cambridge men, which should form a strong and concentrated Mission, in affiliation with one of the recognized societies. Leading men at the University, Lightfoot and Westcott at their head, formed themselves into a committee for the purpose of supporting such a mission ; and eventually it was arranged to make Delhi the centre of work, and to establish the ‘Cambridge Mission to Delhi,’ in connection with the S.P.G.

“The first party, headed by Edward Bickersteth, went out in 1877. Amongst its members were Mr. Lefroy (now Bishop of Lahore) and Mr. Allnutt (now Head of the Mission). The Mission from the first excited much interest, and it has always been regarded as, in many ways, a pattern of judicious organization and vigorous work. It has been the prototype of other efforts such as the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, and the Dublin University Missions in Chota Nagpore (S.P.G.) and Fuh-Kien (C.M.S.).

“In 1885 Bishop Poole, of Japan, having died in the second year of his episcopate, Archbishop Benson appointed Edward Bickersteth to the vacant see.

“For twelve years the new bishop did admirable service in Japan, particularly in the establishment of two Associated Missions, St. Andrew’s for men, and St. Hilda’s for women, on the lines already well tested at Delhi ; also in the formation of the Nippon Sei-Kokwai, the Japanese Church in

communion with the Churches of England and America. He was a real missionary statesman, who won the confidence of the C.M.S. as well as of the S.P.G., and in whose career the Bishop of Exeter found one of the greatest joys of his life.

"But this was not the only family link of the Bishop's with the mission field. It was again and again a cause of unfeigned satisfaction to him to see one and another of his family circle going forth in the name of the Lord. Two of his sisters, widows, were Mrs. Durrant and Mrs. Cook. In 1876, the stepson of the former, the Rev. G. B. Durrant (now a Secretary of C.M.S. in Salisbury Square), went to India. In 1894 Mrs. Durrant herself, the Bishop's sister, went in advancing years to India, accompanied by her daughter, Miss Emily Bickersteth Durrant, and followed two years later by her son, the Rev. H. B. Durrant. In 1896 and 1899, two sons of Mrs. Cook, Drs. A. R. and J. H. Cook, went to Uganda as medical missionaries. All six were in connexion with the C.M.S."

APPENDIX IV

THE following passages from the Bishop's Charges of 1888 and 1895 illustrate his views upon subjects which are of more than transient and local importance.

“Daily Services, The Clergy in Country Parishes, and Home Reunion.

“1. *DAILY SERVICES.*—The humblest house of prayer ought, save with rare exceptions, to have its daily service and its weekly celebration of the Holy Communion. Many of the clergy seem to think this is impossible in their parishes ; their churches are far away from the bulk of the inhabitants ; a daily service, they say, would only be attended by the members of their own family, and perhaps two or three aged neighbours ; and as to a weekly Communion, they find it difficult to gather their communicants around the Holy Table once a month.

¶ “Now, here I would remind you the Preface to our Prayer Book says : ‘All priests and deacons are to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly, not being let by sickness or some other urgent cause. And the curate that ministereth in every parish church or chapel, being at home and not being otherwise reasonably hindered, shall say the same in the parish church or chapel where he ministereth, and shall cause a bell to be tolled thereunto a convenient time before he begin, that the people may come to hear God’s Word and to pray with him.’

“I know that this habit has widely fallen into disuse. But, I ask, has the disuse tended to the greater devoutness of our people ? I trow not. Is family prayer (and I should be sorry indeed to do anything that would weaken that great bond of home piety)—but is family prayer so general that it supplies all who desire it with the daily opportunities of united worship ? I trow not. Is the Morning and Evening Prayer said privately in their own homes by those who fail to say it in Church ? I trow not by most clergymen. There is

something to my mind inexpressibly dreary and desolate in the house of God being closed from Monday morning to Saturday night. A closed church repels rather than attracts the heart's best sympathies. And, on the other hand, the very fact of the house of prayer being opened day by day, and the church-going bell being tolled, and the little company of suppliants being known to assemble together for worship, has a quiet but deep influence on the minds of others. Be it that only two or three are there, the prayer of St. Chrysostom has lost nothing of its virtue by the lapse of years ; the Saviour's promise is pleaded, and will not be pleaded in vain. Who does not gratefully think of Anna in the temple ? The little rivulet of prayer swells the great tide of supplication, which is arising from the church militant night and day. And the numbers of worshippers will increase. Children will become used to the devout custom. In times of illness and anxiety at home, other members of the family will be found stealing into the church that they may join in the prayers offered for the sufferer. So times of deliverance will claim united thanksgiving. By degrees the church would vindicate its name more and more as the house of prayer. It may take the lifetime of a generation fully to revive the use of the daily office ; but the lifetime of a generation is a short period in the history of a church.

"I have spoken of the house of God being open for daily service. But why should it ever be closed from morning to night ? It is not that I view private prayer to be of more avail in God's house than in our own homes. But there are many, especially in our large towns, though not in these only, who cannot make a solitude and silence for devotion in their own homes ; and it seems only right that the house of prayer should be available for their use. I remember how earnestly the revered Hugh McNeile, when a pastor in Liverpool, advocated this, saying that many of the working classes found it so hard to obey our Master's command, 'But thou, when thou prayest, enter thou into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.' Perhaps they have a large family and only one or two rooms, and find it difficult indeed to secure a quiet corner for prayer and study of the Word. But in going forth to their work or returning at nightfall, or even at the noonday meal time, they can snatch a few minutes for thought and prayer in the courts of the Lord's house. Surely, if this usage became general among us, a new glory would clothe the promise,

'Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.'

"*2. THE CLERGY IN COUNTRY PARISHES.*—At the very commencement of his episcopate, the Bishop was met by the difficulty of all dioceses with large rural districts, namely, the existence of very small parishes and the consequent lack of work for the parish priests in charge. Thus, according to the last census, there are twenty-three parishes with less than one hundred souls, sixty-one with more than one hundred and less than two hundred, sixty-three more than two hundred and less than three hundred souls. And this impression has been accentuated and emphasized by the complaints to me of some excellent clergymen who long to spend and be spent for Christ, that they hardly know how to fill up their time. They have said that in the course of one or two days every week they can visit every parishioner they think it wise and well to visit; there are not enough children to form a parochial week-day school, and on Sunday the worshippers are so few, they feel it difficult to rouse themselves for due preparation. They are active, and strong, and willing, but there is not enough to be done. Time hangs heavy on their hands.

"Now this is a real and practical evil which ought to be grappled with and overcome. Mental and moral sinews unused become useless.

"I quite admit that it may be a serious question with such brethren, whether they are right in continuing to hold a pastoral charge which seems below the powers with which the Master has gifted them, when the Church, both at home and abroad, is crying out for labourers in fields white to the harvest. But many have carefully weighed this question, and are persuaded, so far as they can read the signs of God's providence, they are working where He would have them work.

"I would then remind them that in the quiet of their life they may especially cultivate the garden of their own souls. How often, in large, overgrown parishes, are pastors complaining, 'They made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept.' Well has a modern student said, 'The character of Christian life in our own time is rather humane than devotional, its tendency rather outward than upward, its utterance rather in works of mercy than in songs of praise.' Have we not all to be on our

guard, that we do not make our worship merely public service, and so fail to make our service worship? In our own free age and country, when opportunities for doing good are so multiplied, when there is not a talent or a grace but may find its own full and appropriate exercise in the great field of work, may we not learn something from the men of those more fettered days, when Christian life, hemmed in on all sides but one, rose with all its force towards the heavens, from which no human tyranny could shut it out? And thus may we learn more to seek communion with God, not merely as the strength for work, but as the end and crown of all work; not chiefly as the means of life, but its highest object.' At least, my brethren, let not the Master have occasion to say to any who long for more work, 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour?'

"And then, suffer me to remind you, as I would remind myself, of the awful value of one soul for whom Christ died, one living soul, that mysterious microcosm in which the conflict between light and darkness is being waged, and the new creation must be wrought in the man, or woman, or child that is born of God. And you are shepherding one, or two, or three hundred such souls. You are watching for them as those that must give account. God grant that you may go before them, and lead them day by day to the green pastures and still waters, and bring them at last to the heavenly fold.

"But even when the utmost heed is given to personal religion and pastoral work, how often in such small parishes much of priceless time and strength remains; and the question has weighed heavily upon me, how can this surplus of mental and spiritual force in willing labourers be utilized for the glory of God and the service of His church?"

Then, after enumerating the list of large and overgrown parishes in the diocese—seventeen, for instance, with between five and ten thousand—he added :

"Now, I venture to ask you, if the superabundant strength of the clergy in small parishes cannot be laid as a votive offering at Christ's feet, to redress in some measure this great inequality of labour. I should be very sorry to see parishes reduced to a dead level in numbers, or to have the ancient landmarks removed. But I believe much might be done by brotherly counsel and co-operation. Our rural deaneries, which are such an increasing power in the Church

of England, supply the framework ; and ruridecanal chapters would afford the opportunities for arrangements.

" If every clergyman who is in charge of a small parish would undertake some work for which he is especially qualified, or for which he could by prayer and pains qualify himself, his talent would not long be buried. Perhaps he would take up—

" (a) *Education* in its manifold branches, mastering its details and its latest developments in schools for all classes, and being ready to respond to the request of any brother who might apply to him for advice and assistance ; or

" (b) The great *Social Questions* of temperance, soberness, and chastity, and the kindred subject of healthful recreation, such as bell-ringing and choral unions ; or

" (c) *The Dwellings of the Poor* and the kindred subject of *Thrift* ; or

" (d) *Church History*, which is our best and truest church defence, including the great and necessary controversy with the fallen Church of Rome ; or

" (e) *Home Mission Work*, as represented by the Church Pastoral Aid and Additional Curates' Societies ; or

" (f) *Missions to the Colonies and to the Heathen*, as represented by the Gospel Propagation and Church Missionary Societies. To make himself thoroughly acquainted with the work carried on in a single field of missionary enterprise, as Africa, or India, or China, or Japan, or America, or the islands of the Pacific, so as to be able to lecture upon it, might well engage the prayerful study of one labourer ; or

" (g) *Theology*, that highest of all sciences : are there not resident among us masters in Israel at whose feet we would all gladly sit and learn ? or

" (h) that which of all efforts demands the deepest humility, and the ripest faith, and the most Christ-like love of souls, I mean *the conduct of Quiet Days, and Retreats, and Parochial Missions*.

" And in many of these works, my reverend brethren, you will be able to engage the willing co-operation of the laity ; they will be first your disciples, and soon your fellow-labourers.

" Other subjects will suggest themselves to you ; one clerical friend could give a day, or two days, a week of pastoral visitation in the parish of an overburdened brother ; another could take a weekly lecture ; another could edit a ruri-decanal magazine. But the Apostle's words will abide

with us all, ‘As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another ; having then gifts differing according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith ; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering ; or he that teacheth, on teaching.’ Let us settle it in our minds, the Church wants the gifts with which Christ has endowed every one of His servants ; we shall then be prepared to listen to the Apostle’s charge to Timothy, ‘Neglect not the gift that is in thee.’

“3. *HOME REUNION AND THE REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM.*—The Grindelwald gathering of Churchmen and Nonconformists, convened on the basis of the Lambeth Conference proposals, Mr. Gladstone’s article on ‘The Place of Heresy and Schism in the Modern Christian Church,’ the address of Lord Halifax to the Bristol branch of the English Church Union, the Pope’s recent Encyclical, have all drawn the thoughts and studies of Christian men to demand an answer to the question, ‘Why are the disciples of Christ so separated from one another ?’ The discussion will, I trust, give fresh urgency to our supplication, when we pray for the whole Church Militant here on earth, and beseech God to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord. But we cannot forget that truth comes before unity and unity before concord. We are trustees of the faith once for all delivered to the saints ; we cannot surrender it without breach of trust.

“For example, we as Churchmen steadfastly believe that infant baptism is according to the mind of Christ ; we dare not forego it to secure corporate reunion with Baptist dissenters. We steadfastly believe in the historic episcopate as Christ’s will and ordinance for the shepherding of His Church, we dare not put it aside to secure corporate reunion with Independent Nonconformists. We steadfastly believe in one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus ; but we repudiate the mediatorship of the Virgin Mary and Saints in Paradise. We steadfastly believe that Christ is the Truth in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and that all scripture is given by inspiration of God ; but we repudiate the infallibility of the Pope and his decretals. We steadfastly believe that in the Holy Communion Feast, the souls of the faithful are strengthened and refreshed by the

Body and Blood of Christ as their bodies are by the bread and wine ; but we utterly repudiate Transubstantiation in the Supper of the Lord. We pray from the heart that our brethren in the Confession of our one Lord and Master, though now overshadowed by so many grievous and perilous superstitions, may be drawn to the purer faith and freedom which we enjoy. They must come to us ; we cannot go to them. Be their invitations ever so persuasive, be their offers ever so attractive, '*Quicquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*'

"The thought that the disunion of Christendom is the great obstacle to the conversion of the world to Christ, no doubt weighs heavily on many hearts. I know it has often weighed on mine. But I would emphasize a conviction that the intercession of our Great High Priest for the Unity of His people, when He said, 'Neither pray I for those alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me,' has been progressively fulfilled during these long centuries of the Church's warfare in those who pass within the veil."

"The architect who is building a magnificent cathedral may draw his granite stones, and massive monoliths, and precious marbles, from far distant quarries, where they have been hewn, and chiselled, and polished ; others may lie for a while alongside of each other without touching, beneath the shadow of the walls, while the structure is being builded ; but as they fill, one by one, their appointed places in the edifice, the symmetry of the design, which was from the first in the Architect's mind, begins by degrees to appear. It is not, however, until the work is finished that the irresistible fascination of oneness, myriads of stones forming one temple, is felt in all its power. Then multitudes flock from all lands to see, and admire, and imitate. So are all the Saints built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in Whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

"While the stones are being hewn and polished in the quarries or workshop of the mason, there must needs be jarring sounds, and grinding frictions, and biting sculptures, and divers fragments scattered here and there, but as we read

of Solomon's temple, 'the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.' So it is in the Paradise of the Blessed Dead. But when the top stone is brought forth, when Christ shall appear and His people with Him in glory, then shall the prayer of our Advocate with the Father be fulfilled; then shall the Church of the First-Born be revealed as the Bride for ever one, and the world, attracted by that perfect unity, shall believe on the Eternal Son of God. I am persuaded we often take too limited a view of the designs unfolded in the Scriptures of truth. We do well to remember how very early in the development of the counsels of the Most High our lot is cast. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Of His own will begat He us, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures. The illimitable harvest is yet to come."

Proposed Inscription for a Memorial Brass to the Bishop
in Exeter Cathedral :

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
and in loving remembrance of
EDWARD HENRY BICKERSTETH, D.D.
Vicar of Christ Church, Hampstead, 1855–1885,
BISHOP OF EXETER
A.D. 1885–1900.

The only son of the Rev. Edward Bickersteth,
Rector of Watton, Herts., born on the Festival of
the Conversion of St. Paul, 1825, and called to his
rest on May 16, 1906.

He was a holy and humble man of heart ;
As Parish Priest, watchful in the pastoral care of
his flock and enthusiastic in missionary zeal ;
As Bishop, a true father in God, strong in sym-
pathy, and tender in his rule ;
As Poet, used of God to enrich the treasury of
sacred song, comforting many by his hymn—
“ Peace, perfect Peace.”

“ Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in
hope, continuing instant in prayer.”

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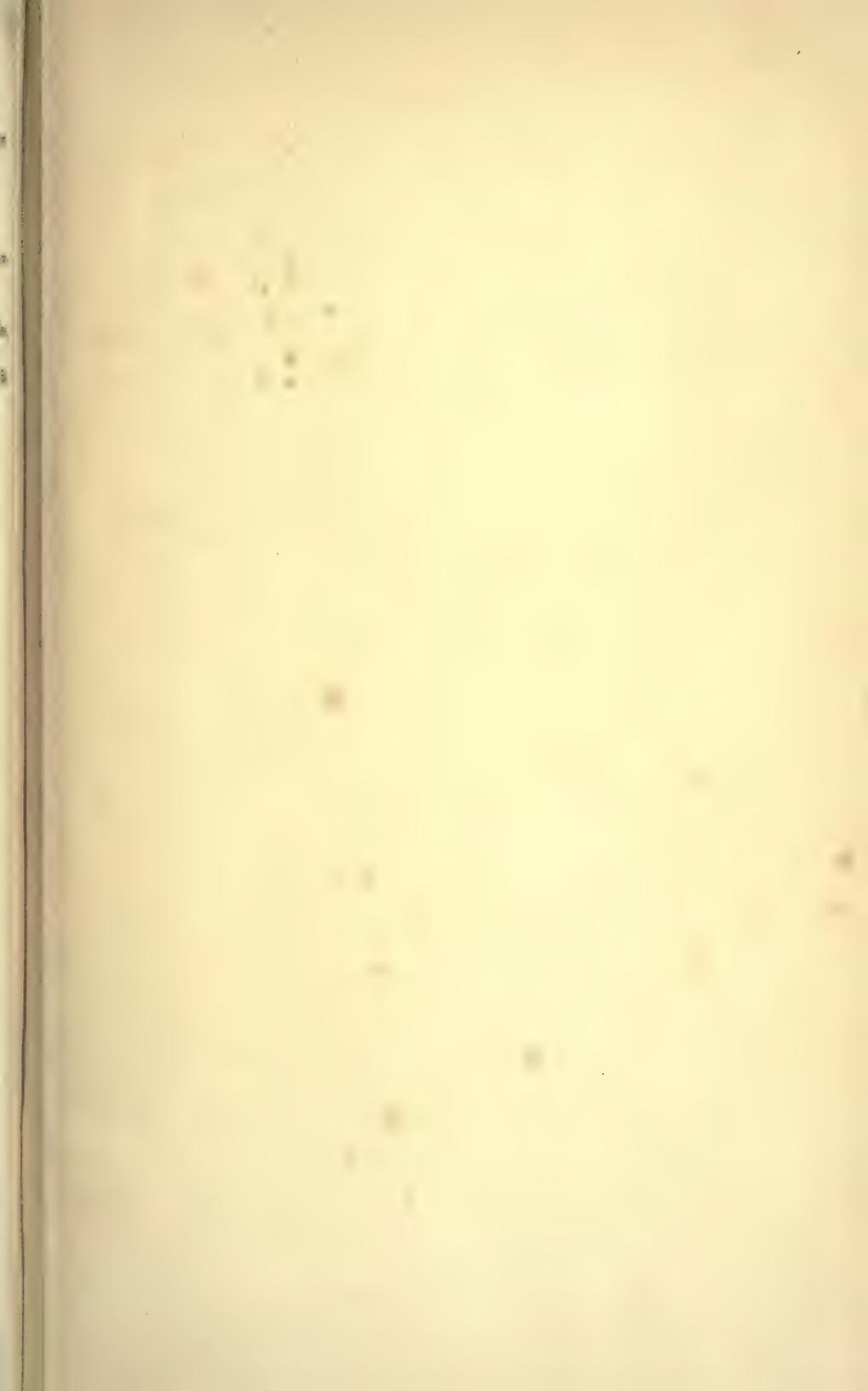
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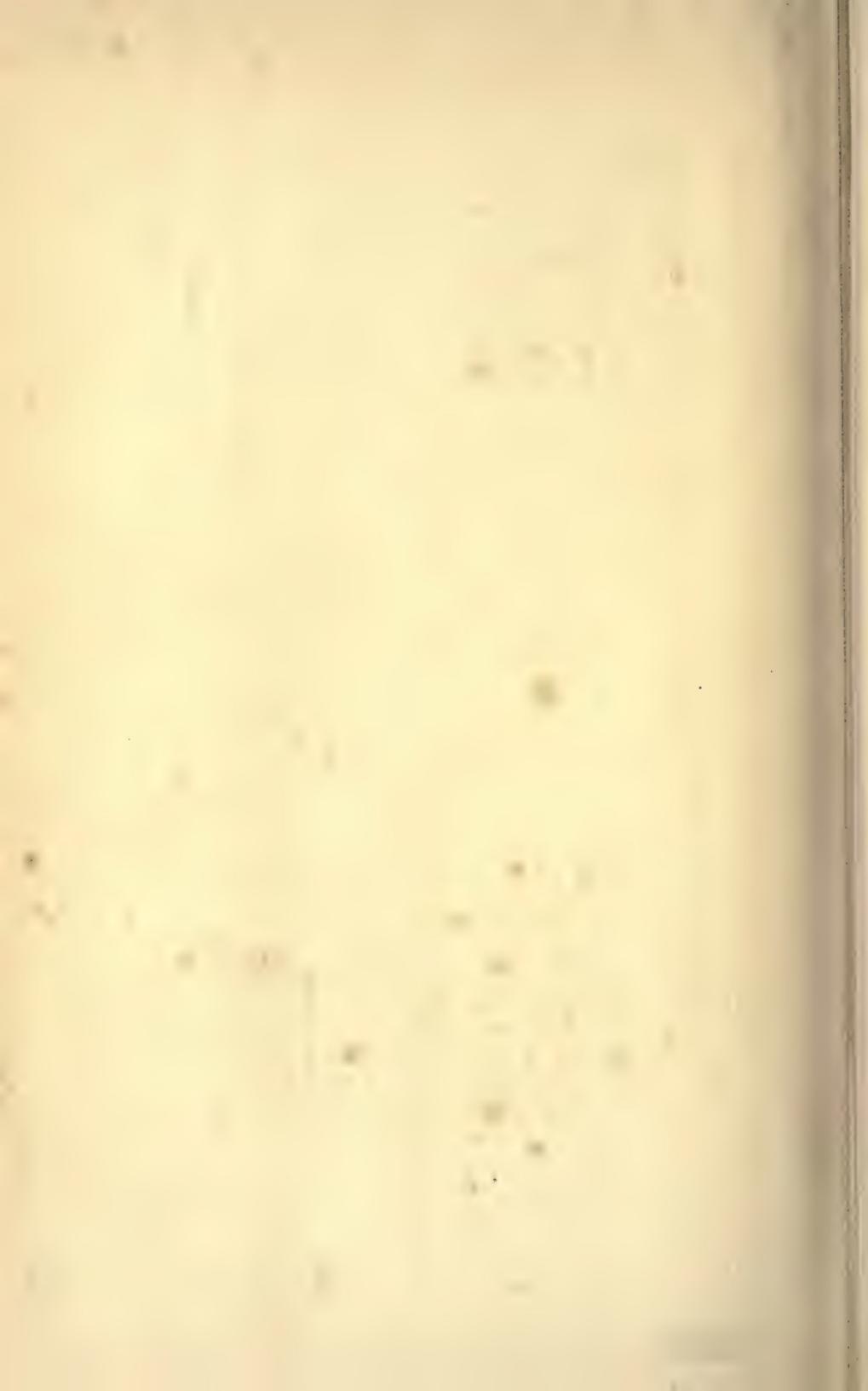
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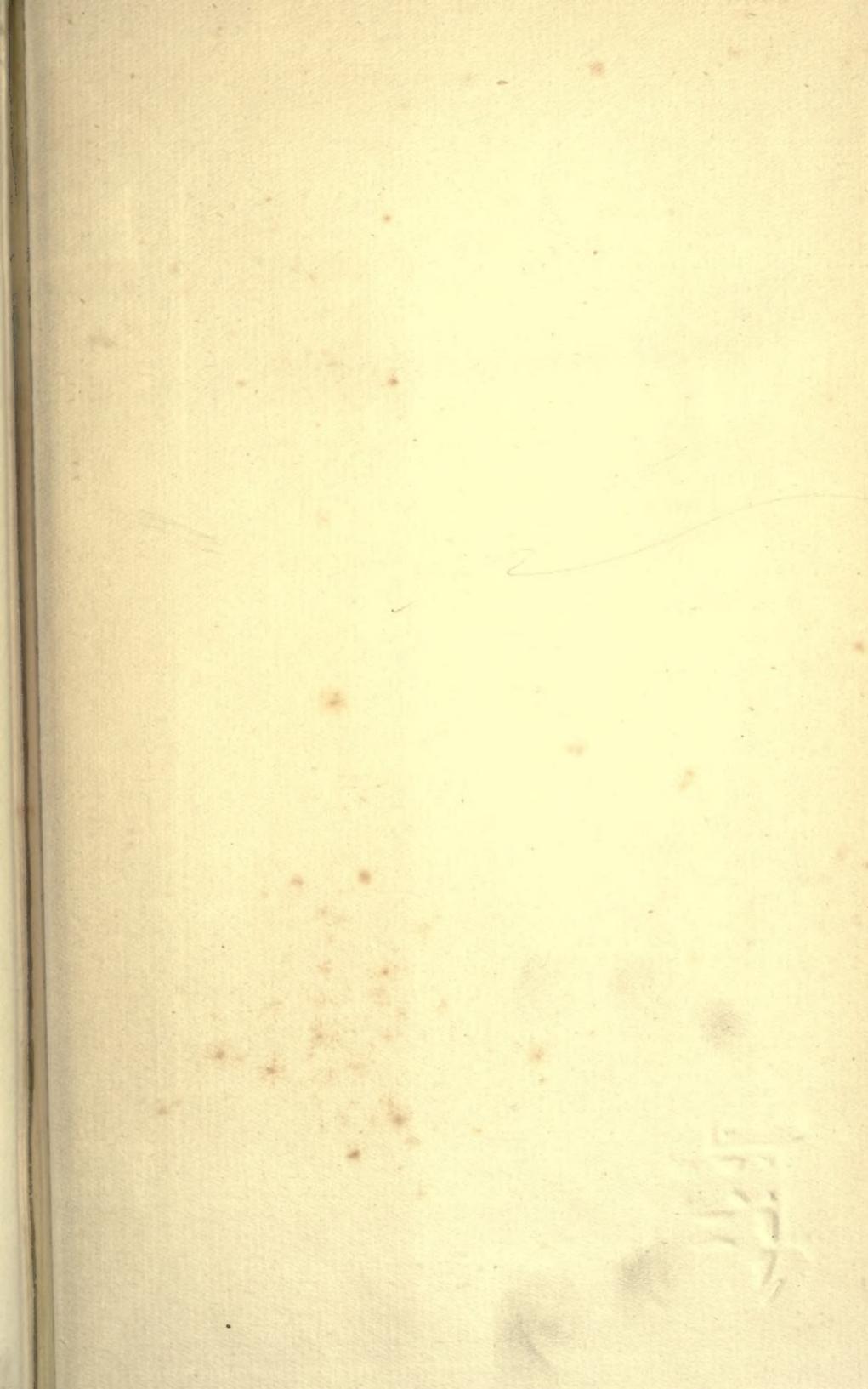
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